ALCIPHRON:

OR, THE

MINUTE PHILOSOPHER.

IN

SEVEN DIALOGUES.

Containing an Apology for the Christian Religion, against those who are called Free-thinkers.

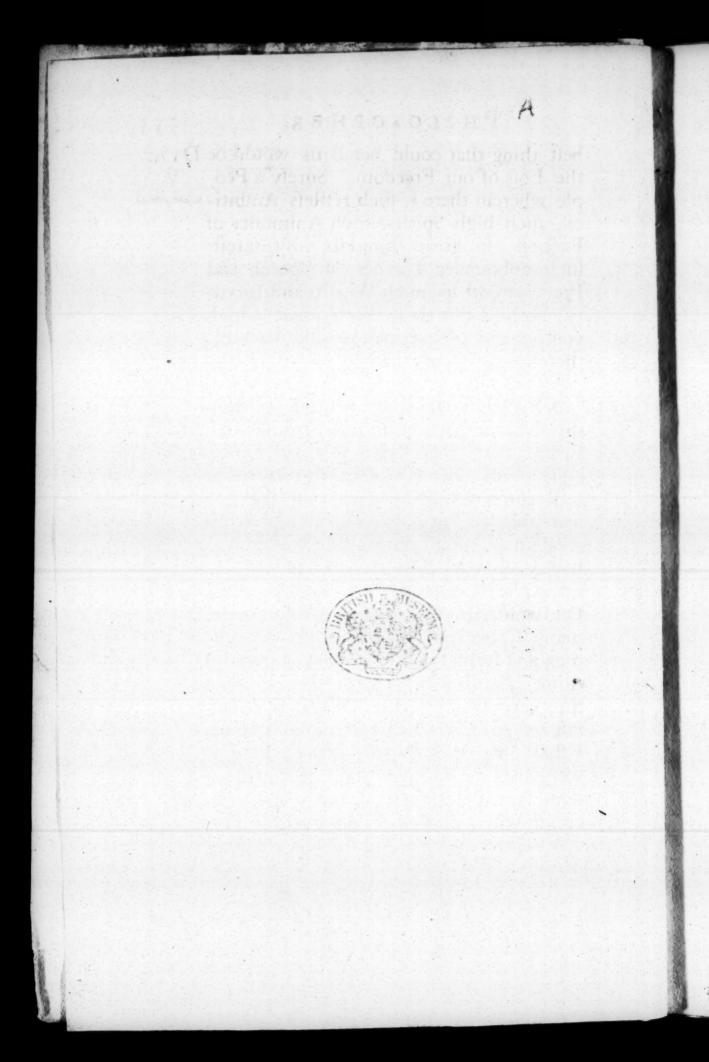
VOLUME the FIRST.



They have for saken me the Fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. Jerem. ii. 13. Sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti Philosophi censent, nihil sentiam, non wereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui Philosophi irrideant. Cicero.

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N: Printed for J. Tonson in the Strand. 1732.





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HE Author's Design being to consider the Free-thinker in the various Lights of Atheist, Libertine, Enthu-

siast, Scorner, Critic, Metaphysician, Fatalist, and Sceptic, it must not therefore be imagined, that every one of these Characters agrees with every individual Free-thinker, no more being implied, than that each Part agrees with some or other of the Sect. There may possibly be a Reader who shall think the Character of Atheist agrees with none: But though it hath been often said, there is no such thing as a Speculative Atheist; yet we must allow, there are several Atheists who pretend to Speculation. This the Author knows to be true; and is well assured, that one of the most noted Writers against Christianity in our Times, declared, he had found out a Demonstration against the Being A 2

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of a God. And he doubts not, who ever will be at the pains to inform himself, by a general Conversation, as well as Books, of the Principles and Tenets of our modern Free-thinkers, will see too much Cause to be persuaded that nothing in the ensuing Characters is beyond the Life.

As the Author hath not confined himself to write against Books alone, so he thinks it necessary to make this Declaration. It must not therefore be thought, that Authors are misrepresented, if every Notion of Alciphron or Lysicles is not found precisely in them. A Gentleman, in private Conference, may be supposed to speak plainer than others write, to improve on their Hints, and draw Conclusions from their Principles.

Whatever they pretend, it is the Author's Opinion, that all those who write either explicitly or by Insinuation against the Dignity, Freedom, and Immortality of the Humane Soul,

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may so far forth be justly said to unhinge the Principles of Morality, and destroy the Means of making Men reasonably virtuous. Much is to be apprehended from that Quarter against the Interests of Virtue. Whether the Apprehension of a certain admired Writer *, that the Cause of Virtue is likely to fuffer less from its witty Antagonists, than from its tender Nurses, who are apt to overlay it, and kill it with Excess of Care and Cherishing, and make it a mercenary thing by talking so much of its Rewards: whether, I say, this Apprehension be so well founded? the Reader may determine.

As for the Treatife concerning Vision, why the Author annexed it to the Minute Philosopher, will appear upon Perusal of the Fourth Dialogue.

^{*} Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour, Part. II. Sect. 3.



RRAT

Page 47. 1. 15. after Divinity place a Comma.

Page 59. 1. 5. for act read acts

Page 89. 1. 10: for Mo read No Page 90. 1. 13. for or read for

Page 93. 1. 23. for would read should

Page 103. l. 19. for you do read do you

Ibid. 1. 23. for Distinct read Instinct Page 140. 1. 27. for that is read that it is

Page 141. 1. 26. for confider read confidereth

Page 174. 1. 14. for it is read is it

Page 175. 1. 3. for be related read be so related

Page 232. 1. 9. for found read founded

Page 265. l. 2. for this read the

Page 281. I. 27. for lines read lives

Page 296. 1. 20. dele is

Page 328. l. 17. for augmentation read argumentation.

Page 334. 1. 3. after XXIX. place CRI.

N. B. Page 191. 1.8. after CRI. what follows is to be inserted.

It is true, the main Scope of all his Writings (as he himfelf tells us) was to affert the Reality of a Beauty and Charm in moral as well as in natural Subjects: to demonstrate a Taste, which he thinks more effectual than Principle: to recommend Morals on the same Foot with Manners: and so to advance Philosophy on the very Foundation of what is called agreeable and polite. As for Religious Qualms, the Belief of a future State of Rewards and Punishments, and such Matters, this great Man sticks not to declare, that the liberal, polished, and refined Part of Mankind must needs confider them only as Children's Tales and Amusements of the Vulgar. For the fake therefore of the better Sort he hath, in great Goodness and Wisdom, thought of something else, to wit, a Taste or Relish: this he assures us, is at last what will influence: Since according to him whoever has any Impression of Gentility (as he calls it) or Politeness, is so acquainted with the Decorum and Grace of things, as to be readily transported with the Contemplation thereof *.

See Characteristics, Vol. III. Miscel. 5. cap. 3. and Miscel. 3. cap. 2.



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tions to be esteemed natural. XV. Truth the same, notwithstanding Diversity of Opinions. XVI. Rule and Measure of moral Truths.



I. Flattered my felf, Theages, that before this time I might have been able to have fent you an agreeable Account of the Success of the Affair, which

brought me into this remote Corner of the Country. But instead of this, I shou'd now give you the Detail of its Miscarriage, if I did not rather choose to entertain you with fome amufing Incidents, which have helped to make me easy under a Circumstance I cou'd neither obviate nor forefee. Events are not in our power; but it always is, to make a good use even of the very worst. And I must needs own, the Course and Event of this Affair gave opportunity for Reflections, that make me some amends for a great loss of Time, Pains, and Expence. A Life of Action, which takes its Issue from the Counsels, Passions, and Views of other Men, if it doth not draw a Man to imitate, will at least teach him to observe. And a Mind at liberty to reflect on its own Observations, if it produce nothing useful to the World, seldom fails of Entertainment

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tertainment to it self. For several Months DIAL? past I have enjoy'd such Liberty and Leifure in this distant Retreat, far beyond the Verge of that great Whirlpool of Business, Faction, and Pleafure, which is called the World. And a Retreat in it felf agreeable, after a long Scene of Trouble and Disquiet, was made much more so by the Conversation and good Qualities of my Host Euphranor, who unites in his own Person the Philosopher and the Farmer: two Characters not so inconsistent in Nature as by Cuftom they feem to be. Euphranor, from the time he left the University, hath liv'd in this small Town; where he is possessed of a convenient House with a Hundred Acres of Land adjoining to it; which being improved by his own Labour, yield him a plentiful Subfistence. He hath a good Collection, chiefly of old Books, left him by a Clergyman his Uncle, under whose Care he was brought up. And the Business of his Farm doth not hinder him from making good use of it. He hath read much, and thought more; his Health and Strength of Body enabling him the better to bear Fatigue of Mind. He is of opinion that he cou'd not carry on his Studies with more Advantage in the Closet than in the Field, where his Mind is feldom idle while he prunes B 2

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DIAL. prunes the Trees, follows the Plough, or looks after his Flocks. In the House of this honest Friend I became acquainted with Crito, a neighbouring Gentleman of distinguished Merit and Estate, who lives in great Friendship with Euphranor. Last Summer, Crito, whose Parish-Church is in our Town, dining on a Sunday at Euphranor's, I happened to inquire after his Guests, whom we had seen at Church with him the Sunday before. They are both well, faid Crito, but, having once occafionally conformed, to fee what fort of Affembly our Parish cou'd afford, they had no farther Curiofity to gratify at Church, and fo chose to stay at home. How, said Euphranor, are they then Diffenters? No, replied Crito, they are Free-thinkers. Euphranor, who had never met with any of this Species or Sect of Men, and but little of their Writings, shew'd a great Defire to know their Principles or System. That is more, faid Crito, than I will undertake to tell you. Their Writers are of different Opinions. Some go farther, and explain themselves more freely than others. But the current general Notions of the Sect are best learned from Conversation with those who profess themselves of it. Your Curiofity may now be fatisfy'd, if you and Dion wou'd spend a Week at my

House with these Gentlemen, who seem DIAL. very ready to declare and propagate their Opinions. Alcipbron is above Forty, and no Stranger either to Men or Books. I knew him first at the Temple, which, upon an Estate's falling to him, he quitted, to travel through the polite parts of Europe. Since his Return he hath lived in the Amusements of the Town, which being grown stale and tasteless to his Palate, have flung him into a fort of splenetic Indolence. The young Gentleman, Lyficles, is a near Kinfman of mine, one of lively Parts, and a general Infight into Letters; who, after having passed the Forms of Education, and feen a little of the World, fell into an Intimacy with Men of Pleasure, and Free-thinkers, I am afraid much to the damage of his Constitution and his Fortune. But what I most regret, is the Corruption of his Mind by a Set of pernicious Principles, which, having been observed to survive the Pasfions of Youth, forestal even the remote Hopes of Amendment. They are both Men of Fashion, and wou'd be agreeable enough, if they did not fancy themselves Free-thinkers. But this, to speak the Truth, has given them a certain Air and Manner, which a little too vifibly declare they think themselves wifer than the rest of the World,

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DIAL. I shou'd therefore be not at all displeased if my Guests met with their Match, where they least expected it, in a Country Farmer. I shall not, replied Euphranor, pretend to any more than barely to inform my felf of their Principles and Opinions. For this end I propose to-morrow to set a Week's Task to my Labourers, and accept your Invitation, if Dion thinks good. To which I gave confent. Mean while, faid Crito, I shall prepare my Guests, and let them know that an honest Neighbour hath a mind to discourse them on the Subject of their Free-thinking. And, if I am not mistaken, they will please themselves with the Prospect of leaving a Convert behind them, even in a Country-Village, Next Morning Euphranor rose early, and spent the Forenoon in ordering his Af-After Dinner we took our Walk to Crito's, which lay through half a dozen pleafant Fields planted round with Plane-trees, that are very common in this part of the Country. We walked under the delicious Shade of these Trees for about an Hour before we came to Crito's House, which stands in the middle of a fmall Park, beautify'd with two fine Groves of Oak and Walnut, and a winding Stream of fweet and clear Water. We met a Servant at the Door with a small Baf-

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Basket of Fruit which he was carrying DIAL. into a Grove, where he faid his Master was with the two Strangers. We found them all three fitting under a Shade. And after the usual Forms at first meeting, Euphranor and I fate down by them. Our Conversation began upon the Beauty of this rural Scene, the fine Season of the Year, and fome late Improvements which had been made in the adjacent Country by new Methods of Agriculture. Whence Alciphron took occasion to observe, That the most valuable Improvements came latest. I should have small Temptation, faid he, to live where Men have neither polished Manners, nor improved Minds, though the Face of the Country were ever fo well improved. But I have long obferved, that there is a gradual Progress in humane Affairs. The first Care of Mankind is to supply the Cravings of Nature: in the next place they study the Conveniencies and Comforts of Life. But the fubduing Prejudices, and acquiring true Knowledge, that Herculean Labour is the last, being what demands the most perfect Abilities, and to which all other Advantages are preparative. Right, faid Euphranor, Alciphron hath touched our true Defect. It was always my Opinion, That as foon as we had provided Subfiftence for the Bo-B 4

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I. the Mind. But the Defire of Wealth steps between and engrosseth Mens Thoughts.

II. ALC. Thought is that which we are told distinguisheth Man from Beast: and Freedom of Thought makes as great a difference between Man and Man. It is to the noble Afferters of this Privilege and Perfection of Humane kind, the Freethinkers I mean, who have fprung up and multiplied of late Years, that we are indebted for all those important Discoveries, that Ocean of Light which hath broke in and made its way, in spite of Slavery and Superstition. Euphranor, who is a fincere Enemy to both, testified a great Esteem for those Worthies who had preferved their Country from being ruined by them, having spread so much Light and Knowledge over the Land. He added, That he liked the Name and Character of a Free-thinker: but in his Sense of the Word, every honest Inquirer after Truth in any Age or Country was intitled to it. He therefore defired to know what this Sect was that Alciphron had spoken of as newly fprung up? what were their Tenets? what were their Discoveries? and wherein they employ'd themselves, for the benefit of Mankind? Of all which, he shou'd

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shou'd think himself obliged, if Alciphron DIAL. would inform him. That I shall, very eafily, replied Alciphron, for I profess my felf one of the number, and my most intimate Friends are some of the most confiderable among them. And perceiving that Euphranor heard him with Respect, he proceeded very fluently. You must know, faid he, that the Mind of Man may be fitly compared to a piece of Land. What stubbing, plowing, digging, and harrowing, is to the one; that thinking, reflecting, examining, is to the other. Each hath its proper Culture; and as Land that is fuffered to lie waste and wild for a long Tract of Time, will be overspread with Brush-Wood, Brambles, Thorns, and such Vegetables which have neither Use nor Beauty; even so there will not fail to fprout up in a neglected uncultivated Mind, a great number of Prejudices and abfurd Opinions, which owe their Origin partly to the Soil it felf, the Passions and Imperfections of the Mind of Man; and partly to those Seeds which chance to be scattered in it by every Wind of Doctrine, which the Cunning of Statesmen, the Singularity of Pedants, the Superstition of Fools, or the Imposture of Priests, shall raise. Represent to your self the Mind of Man, or Humane Nature in general, that

DIAL. for fo many Ages had lain obnoxious to the Frauds of defigning, and the Follies of weak Men: How it must be over-run with Prejudices and Errors: what firm and deep Roots they must have taken: and confequently how difficult a Task it must be to extirpate them: And yet this Work, no less difficult than glorious, is the Employment of the modern Free-thinkers. Alcipbron having faid this, made a Pause, and looked round on the Company. Truly, faid I, a very laudable Undertaking! We think, faid Euphranor, that it is praiseworthy to clear and fubdue the Earth, to tame brute Animals, to fashion the Outfides of Men, provide Sustenance for their Bodies, and cure their Maladies. But what is all this in comparison of that most excellent and useful Undertaking, to free Mankind from their Errors, and to improve and adorn their Minds? For things of less Merit towards the World, Altars have been raised, and Temples built in ancient Times. Too many in our Days, replied Alcipbron, are fuch Fools as not

to know their best Benefactors from their worst Enemies: They have a blind Respect for those who enslave them; and look upon their Deliverers as a dangerous Sort of Men, that wou'd undermine received Principles and Opinions. EUPH.

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It were a great pity such worthy ingenious DIAL. Men shou'd meet with any Discouragement. For my part, I shou'd think a Man, who fpent his Time in fuch a painful impartial Search after Truth, a better Friend to Mankind than the greatest Statesman or Hero; the Advantage of whose Labours is confined to a little Part of the World, and a short Space of Time; whereas a Ray of Truth may enlighten the whole World, and extend to future Ages. ALC. It will be some time, I fear, before the common Herd think as you do. But the better Sort, the Men of Parts and polite Education, pay a due Regard to the Patrons of Light and Truth.

III. EUPH. The Clergy, no doubt, are on all Occasions ready to forward and applaud your worthy Endeavours. Upon hearing this, Lysicles cou'd hardly refrain from Laughing. And Alciphron, with an Air of Pity, told Euphranor, that he perceived he was unacquainted with the real Character of those Men: For, saith he, you must know, that of all Men living they are our greatest Enemies. If it were possible, they wou'd extinguish the very Light of Nature, turn the World into a Dungeon, and keep Mankind for ever in Chains and Darkness. EUPH. I never imagined any thing

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DIAL, thing like this of our Protestant Clergy, particularly those of the established Church; whom, if I may be allowed to judge by what I have feen of them and their Writings, I shou'd have thought Lovers of Learning and useful Knowledge. ALC. Take my Word for it, Priests of all Religions are the fame: wherever there are Priests, there will be Priestcraft: and wherever there is Priestcraft, there will be a persecuting Spirit, which they never fail to exert to the utmost of their Power against all those who have the Courage to think for themselves, and will not submit to be hoodwinked and manacled by their reverend Leaders. Those great Masters of Pedantry and Jargon have coined feveral Systems, which are all equally true, and of equal Importance to the World. The contending Sects are each alike fond of their own, and alike prone to discharge their Fury upon all who diffent from them. Cruelty and Ambition being the darling Vices of Priests and Churchmen all the World over, they endeavour in all Countries to get an Ascendant over the rest of Mankind; and the Magistrate having a joint Interest with the Priest in subduing, amusing, and scaring the People, too often lends a hand to the Hierarchy; who never think their Authority and Possessions secure, so long as those

who differ from them in opinion are al-DIAL; lowed to partake even in the common Rights belonging to their Birth or Species. To represent the matter in a true Light, figure to your felves a Monstre or Spectre made up of Superstition and Enthusiasm, the joint Issue of Statecraft and Priestcraft, rattling Chains in one Hand, and with the other brandishing a flaming Sword over the Land, and menacing Destruction to all who shall dare to follow the Dictates of Reason and Common Sense. Do but confider this, and then fay if there was not Danger as well as Difficulty in our Undertaking. Yet, fuch is the generous Ardour that Truth inspires, our Free-thinkers are neither overcome by the one, nor daunted by the other. In spite of both we have already made fo many Profelytes among the better Sort, and their Numbers increase so fast, that we hope we shall be able to carry all before us, beat down the Bulwarks of all Tyranny, Secular or Ecclefiaftical, break the Fetters and Chains of our Countrymen, and restore the original inherent Rights, Liberties, and Prerogatives of Mankind. Euphranor heard this Discourse with his Mouth open and his Eyes fixed upon Alciphron, who, having uttered it with no small Emotion, stopt to draw Breath and recover himself: But

DIAL. But finding that no body made answer, he refumed the Thread of his Discourse. and turning to Euphranor spoke in a lower Note what follows. The more innocent and honest a Man is, the more liable is he to be imposed on by the specious Pretences of other Men. You have probably met with certain Writings of our Divines that treat of Grace, Vertue, Goodness, and fuch matters, fit to amuse and deceive a fimple honest Mind. But believe me when I tell you they are all at bottom (however they may gild their Defigns) united by one common Principle in the same Interest. I will not deny there may be here and there a poor half-witted Man that means no mischief: but this I will be bold to fay, that all the Men of Sense among them are true at bottom to these three Pursuits of Ambition, Avarice, and Revenge.

IV. While Alciphron was speaking, a Servant came to tell him and Lysicles, that some Men who were going to London waited to receive their Orders. Where-upon they both rose and went towards the House. They were no sooner gone, but Euphranor addressing himself to Crito said, he believed that poor Gentleman had been a great Sufferer for his Free-thinking: for that he seemed to express himself with

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the Passion and Resentment natural to Men DIAL. who have received very bad Usage. I believe no fuch thing, answered Crito, but have often observed those of his Sect run into two Faults of Conversation, declaiming and bantering, just as the tragic or the comic Humour prevails. Sometimes they work themselves into high Passions, and are frightened at Spectres of their own raifing. In those Fits every Country-Curate passes for an Inquisitor. At other times they affect a fly facetious Manner, making use of Hints and Allusions, expreffing little, infinuating much, and upon the whole feeming to divert themselves with the Subject and their Adversaries. But if you wou'd know their Opinions, you must make them speak out and keep close to the Point. Persecution for Freethinking is a Topic they are apt to enlarge on though without any just Cause, every one being at full Liberty to think what he pleases, there being no such thing in England that I know as Persecution for Opinion, Sentiment, or Thought. But in every Country, I suppose, some Care is taken to restrain petulant Speech: and, whatever Mens inward Thoughts may be, to discourage an outward Contempt of what the Public esteemeth Sacred. Whether this Care in England hath of late been fo excef-

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DIAL. excessive, as to distress the Subjects of this once free and easy Government: whether the Free-thinkers can truly complain of any Hardship upon the score of Conscience or Opinion: you will better be able to judge, when you hear from themselves an account of the Numbers, Progress, and Notions of their Sect: which I doubt not they will communicate fully and freely, provided no body present seems shocked or offended. For in that case it is possible good Manners may put them upon fome Reserve. Oh! said Euphranor, I am never angry with any Man for his Opinion: whether he be Jew, Turk, or Idolater, he may fpeak his Mind freely to me without fear of offending. I shou'd even be glad to hear what he hath to fay, provided he faith it in an ingenuous candid Manner. Whoever digs in the Mine of Truth, I look on as my Fellow-labourer: but if, while I am taking true pains, he diverts himself with teizing me and flinging dust in mine Eyes, I shall foon be tired of him.

V. In the mean time Alciphron and Lysicles having dispatched what they went about returned to us. Lysicles sate down where he had been before. But Alciphron stood over-against us, with his Arms folded across, and his Head reclined on the left Shoulder

Shoulder in the Posture of a Man medi-DIAL. tating. We fate filent not to disturb his thoughts; and after two or three Minutes he uttered those Words, Oh Truth, Oh Liberty! After which he remained musing as before. Upon this Euphranor took the freedom to interrupt him. Alcipbron, faid he, it is not fair to spend your Time in Soliloquies. The Conversation of learned and knowing Men is rarely to be met with in this Corner, and the Opportunity you have put into my Hands I value too much, not to make the best use of it. ALC. Are you then in earnesta Votary of Truth, and is it possible you shou'd bear the liberty of a fair Inquiry? EUPH. It is what I desire of all things. ALC. What! upon every Subject? upon the Notions you first sucked in with your Milk, and which have been ever fince nurfed by Parents; Pastors, Tutors, religious Assemblies, Books of Devotion, and fuch Methods of prepossessing Mens Minds. EUPH. I love Information upon all Subjects that come in my way, and especially upon those that are most important. ALC. If then you are in earnest, hold fair and stand firm, while I probe your Prejudices and extirpate your Principles.

Dum veteres avias tibi de pulmone revello.

Vol. I.

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Having

DIAL. Having faid thus, Alcipbron knit his Brows and made a short Pause, after which he proceeded in the following manner. If we are at the pains to dive and penetrate into the bottom of things, and analyse Opinions into their first Principles, we shall find that those Opinions, which are thought of greatest Consequence, have the flightest Original, being derived either from the casual Customs of the Country where we live, or from early Instruction instilled into our tender Minds, before we are able to discern between Right and Wrong, True and False. The Vulgar (by whom I understand all those who do not make a free Use of their Reason) are apt to take these Prejudices for Things facred and unquestionable, believing them to be imprinted on the Hearts of Men by God himself, or convey'd by Revelation from Heaven, or to carry with them fo great Light and Evidence as must force an Asfent without any Inquiry or Examination. Thus the shallow Vulgar have their Heads furnished with fundry Conceits, Principles, andDoctrines, religious, moral, and political, all which they maintain with a Zeal proportionable to their want of Reason. On the other hand, those who duly employ their Faculties in the search of Truth, take especial care to weed out of their Minds

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and extirpate all fuch Notions or Prejudices DIAL. as were planted in them, before they arrived at the free and intire use of Reason. This difficult task hath been successfully performed by our modern Free-thinkers, who have not only diffected with great Sagacity the received Systemes, and traced every established Prejudice to the Fountain-head, the true and genuine Motives of Affent: But also, having been able to embrace in one comprehensive View the feveral Parts and Ages of the World, they observed a wonderful variety of Customs and Rites, of Institutions Religious and Civil, of Notions and Opinions very unlike and even contrary one to another: A certain Sign they cannot all be true. And yet they are all maintained by their feveral Partizans with the same positive Air and warm Zeal; and if examined will be found to bottom on one and the fame Foundation, the Strength of Prejudice. By the help of these Remarks and Discoveries, they have broke through the Bands of popular Custom, and having freed themselves from Imposture, do now generously lend a Hand to their Fellow-Subjects, to lead them into the same Paths of Light and Liberty. Thus, Gentlemen, I have given you a summary Account of the Views and Endeavours of those Men who

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DIAL. are called Free-thinkers. If in the Course of what I have faid or shall fay hereafter, there be fome things contrary to your pre-conceived Opinions, and therefore shocking and difagreeable, you will pardon the Freedom and Plainness of a Philosopher; and confider that, whatever displeasure I give you of that kind, I do it in strict regard to Truth and Obedience to your own Commands. I am very sensible, that Eyes long kept in the dark, cannot bear a fudden View of noon Day-light, but must be brought to it by degrees. It is for this Reason, the ingenious Gentlemen of our Profession are accustomed to proceed gradually, beginning with those Prejudices to which Men have the least Attachment, and thence proceeding to undermine the rest by slow and insensible Degrees, till they have demolished the whole Fabric of Humane Folly and Superstition. But the little time I can propose to spend here obligeth me to take a shorter course, and be more direct and plain than possibly may be thought to fuit with Prudence and good Manners. Upon this, we affured him he was at full Liberty to speak his Mind of Things, Persons, and Opinions without the least Referve. Liberty, replied Alcipbron, that we Freethinkers are equally willing to give and take.

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right Names, and cannot endure that I.

Truth shou'd suffer through Complaifance. Let us therefore lay it down for a Preliminary, that no Offence be taken at any thing whatsoever shall be said on either side. To which we all agreed.

VI. In order then, faid Alciphron, to find out the Truth, we will suppose that I am bred up, for Instance, in the Church of England: When I come to maturity of Judgment, and reflect on the particular Worship and Opinions of this Church, I do not remember when or by what means they first took possession of my Mind, but there I find them from time immemorial. Then casting an Eye on the Education of Children, from whence I can make a judgment of my own, I observe they are instructed in religious Matters before they can reason about them, and consequently that all such Instruction is nothing else but filling the tender Mind of a Child with Prejudices. I do therefore reject all those Religious Notions, which I confider as the other Follies of my Childhood. I am confirmed in this way of thinking, when I look abroad into the World, where I observe Papists and several Sects of Dissenters, which do all agree C 3

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DIAL agree in a general Profession of Belief in Christ, but differ vastly one from another in the Particulars of Faith and Worship. I then enlarge my View so as to take in Yews and Mahometans, between whom and the Christians I perceive indeed some small Agreement in the Belief of one God; but then they have each their distinct Laws and Revelations, for which they express the same regard. But extending my view still further to Heathenish and Idolatrous Nations I discover an endless Variety, not only in particular Opinions and Modes of Worship, but even in the very Notion of a Deity, wherein they widely differ one from another, and from all the forementioned Sects. Upon the whole, instead of Truth simple and uniform I perceive nothing but Discord, Opposition, and wild Pretensions, all springing from the same Source to wit the Prejudice of Education. From fuch Reasonings and Reflections as these, thinking Men have concluded that all Religions are alike false and fabulous. One is a Christian, another a Jew, a third a Mahometan, a fourth an Idolatrous Gentile, but all from one and the same Reason, because they happen to be bred up each in his respective Sect. In the same manner, therefore, as each of these contending Parties condemns the in

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rest, so an unprejudiced stander-by will DIAL. condemn and reject them all together, observing that they all draw their Origin
from the same fallacious Principle, and are carried on by the same Artistice to answer the same Ends of the Priest and the Magistrate.

VII. EUPH. You hold then that the Magistrate concurs with the Priest in imposing on the People. ALC. I do, and fo must every one who considers things in a true Light. For you must know, the Magistrate's principal Aim is to keep the People under him in awe. Now the public Eye restrains Men from open Offences against the Laws and Government. to prevent secret Transgressions, a Magistrate finds it expedient, that Men shou'd believe there is an Eye of Providence watching over their private Actions and Designs. And, to intimidate those who might otherwise be drawn into Crimes by the Prospect of Pleasure and Profit, he gives them to understand, that whoever escapes Punishment in this Life will be fure to find it in the next; and that so heavy and lasting as infinitely to overbalance the Pleasure and Profit accrewing from his Crimes. Hence, the Belief of a God, the Immortality of the Soul, and a C 4 future

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DIAL, future State of Rewards and Punishments have been esteemed useful Engines of Government. And to the End that these notional airy Doctrines might make a fenfible Impression, and be retained on the minds of Men, skilful Rulers have in the several civilized Nations of the Earth devised Temples, Sacrifices, Churches, Rites, Ceremonies, Habits, Music, Prayer, Preaching, and the like spiritual Trumpery, whereby the Priest maketh temporal Gains, and the Magistrate findeth his Account in frightening and fubduing the People. This is the Original of the Combination between Church and State, of Religion by Law established, of Rights, Immunities, and Incomes of Priests all over the World: There being no Government but would have you fear God that you may honour the King or Civil Power. And you will ever observe that politic Princes keep up a good Understanding with their Clergy, to the end that they in return, by inculcating Religion and Loyalty into the Minds of the People, may render them tame, timorous, and flavish. Crito and I heard this Discourse of Alcipbron with the utmost Attention, though without any Appearance of Surprize, there being indeed nothing in it to us new or unexpected. But Euphranor,

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who had never before been present at DIAL. fuch Conversation, could not help shewing some Astonishment; which Lysicles observing, asked him with a lively Air, how he liked Alcipbron's Lecture. It is, faid he, the first I believe that you ever heard of the Kind, and requireth a strong Stomach to digest it. EUPH. I will own to you, that my Digestion is none of the quickest; but it hath sometimes, by degrees, been able to master things which at first appeared indigestible. present I admire the free Spirit and Eloquence of Alcipbron; but, to speak the Truth, I am rather aftonished, than convinced of the Truth of his Opinions. How (faid he, turning to Alcipbron) is it then possible you shou'd not believe the Being of a God? ALC. To be plain with you, I do not.

VIII. But this is what I foresaw, a Flood of Light let in at once upon the Mind being apt to dazzle and disorder rather than enlighten it. Was I not pinched in Time, the regular way would be to have begun with the Circumstantials of Religion, next to have attacked the Mysteries of Christianity, after that proceeded to the practical Doctrines, and in the last place to have extirpated that which

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DIAL which of all other religious Prejudices, being the first taught, and Basis of the rest, hath taken the deepest Root in our Minds, I mean, the Belief of a God. I do not wonder it flicks with you, having known feveral very ingenious Men who found it difficult to free themselves from this Prejudice. EUPH. All Men have not the same Alacrity and Vigour in thinking: For my own part, I find it a hard Matter to keep pace with you. ALC. To help you, I will go a little way back, and refume the Thread of my First I must acquaint you, Reasoning. That having applied my Mind to contemplate the Idea of Truth, I discovered it to be of a stable, permanent, and uniform nature; not various and changeable, like Modes or Fashions, and things depending on Fancy. In the next place, having observed several Sects, and Subdivisions of Sects espousing very different and contrary Opinions, and yet all professing Christianity, I rejected those Points wherein they differed, retaining only that which was agreed to by all, and fo became a Latitudinarian. Having afterwards, upon a more enlarged View of things, perceived that Christians, Jews, and Mahometans had each their different Systems of Faith, agreeing only in the Bele ır

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lief of one God, I became a Deift. Last-DIAL. ly, extending my View to all the other various Nations which inhabit this Globe, and finding they agreed in no one Point of Faith, but differed one from another, as well as from the forementioned Sects. even in the Notion of a God, in which there is as great Diversity as in the Methods of Worship, I thereupon became an Atheist; it being my Opinion, that a Man of Courage and Sense should follow his Argument wherever it leads him, and that nothing is more ridiculous than to be a Free-thinker by halves. I approve the Man who makes thorough Work, and, not content with lopping off the Branches, extirpates the very Root from which they fprung.

IX. Atheism therefore, that Bugbear of Women and Fools, is the very Top and Perfection of Free-thinking. It is the grand Arcanum to which a true Genius naturally riseth, by a certain Climax or Gradation of Thought, and without which he can never possess his Soul in absolute Liberty and Repose. For your thorough Conviction in this main Article, do but examine the Notion of a God with the fame Freedom that you would other Prejudices. Trace it to the Fountain-head,

DIAL and you shall not find that you had it by any of your Senses, the only true Means of discovering what is real and substantial in Nature. You will find it lying amongst other old Lumber in some obscure Corner of the Imagination, the proper Receptacle of Visions, Fancies, and Prejudices of all Kinds: And if you are more attached to this than the rest, it is only because it is the oldest. This is all, take my Word for it, and not mine only, but that of many more the most ingenious Men of the Age, who, I can affure you, think as I do on the Subject of a Deity. Though fome of them hold it proper to proceed with more Referve in declaring to the World their Opinion in this Particular, than in most others. And it must be owned, there are still too many in England who retain a foolish Prejudice against the Name of Atheist. But it lessens every Day among the better fort; and when it is quite worn out, our Free-thinkers may then, (and not till then) be faid to have given the finishing Stroke to Religion; it being evident that fo long as the Existence of God is believed, Religion must subsist in some Shape But the Root being once or other. plucked up, the Scions which shot from it will of courfe wither and decay. Such are

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are all those whimsical Notions of Con-DIAL. science, Duty, Principle, and the like, which fill a Man's Head with Scruples, awe him with Fears, and make him a more thorough Slave than the Horse he rides. A Man had better a thousand times be hunted by Bailiffs or Messengers than haunted by these Spectres, which embarass and embitter all his Pleasures, creating the most real and fore Servitude upon Earth. But the Free-thinker, with a vigorous flight of Thought breaks through those airy Springes, and afferts his original Independency. Others indeed may talk, and write, and fight about Liberty, and make an outward Pretence to it, but the Free-thinker alone is truly free. Alcipbron having ended this Discourse with an Air of Triumph, Euphranor spoke to him in the following manner. You make clear Work. The Gentlemen of your Profession are, it feems, admirable Weeders. You have rooted up a World of Notions, I should be glad to fee what fine things you have planted in their stead. ALC. Have Patience, good Euphranor. I will shew you in the first place, That whatever was found and good we leave untouched, and encourage it to grow in the Mind of Man. And fecondly, I will shew you what

DIAL. what excellent things we have planted in it. You must know then, that purfuing our close and severe Scrutiny, we do at last arrive at something solid and real, in which all Mankind agree, to wit, the Appetites, Passions, and Senses: These are founded in Nature, are real, have real Objects, and are attended with real and fubstantial Pleasures; Food, Drink, Sleep, and the like animal Enjoyments being what all Men like and love. And if we extend our view to the other kinds of Animals, we shall find them all agree in this, that they have certain natural Appetites and Senses, in the gratifying and fatisfying of which they are constantly employ'd. Now these real natural good things which include nothing of Notion or Fancy, we are fo far from destroying, that we do all we can to cherish and improve them. According to us, every wife Man looks upon himfelf, or his own bodily Existence in this present World, as the Centre and ultimate End of all his Actions and Regards. He confiders his Appetites as natural Guides directing to his proper Good, his Passions and Senses as the natural true Means of enjoying this Good. Hence he endeavours to keep his Appetites in high Relish, his Passions and Senses strong and

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ng nd and lively, and to provide the greatest DIAL. Quantity and Variety of real Objects suit— I. ed to them, which he studieth to enjoy by all possible means, and in the highest Perfection imaginable. And the Man who can do this without Restraint, Remorse, or Fear, is as happy as any other Animal whatsoever, or as his Nature is capable of being. Thus I have given you a succinct View of the Principles, Discoveries, and Tenets of the select Spirits of this enlightned Age.

X. Crito remark'd, that Alciphron had spoke his Mind with great Clearness. Yes, replied Euphranor, we are obliged to the Gentleman for letting us at once into the Tenets of his Sect. But, if I may be allowed to speak my Mind, Alciphron, though in compliance with my own Request, hath given me no small You need, faid Alciphron, Uneafiness. make no Apology for speaking freely what you think to one who professeth himself a Free-thinker. I shou'd be forry to make one, whom I meant to oblige, uneasy. Pray let me know wherein I have offended. I am half ashamed, replied Euphranor, to own that I who am no great Genius have a Weakness incidental to little ones. I would fay that DIAL. I have favourite Opinions, which you represent to be Errors and Prejudices. For Instance, the Immortality of the Soul is a Notion I am fond of, as what supports the Mind with a very pleasing Prospect. And if it be an Error, I should perhaps be of Tully's Mind, who in that Case professed he should be forry to know the Truth, acknowledging no fort of Obligation to certain Philosophers in his Days, who taught, the Soul of Man was mortal. They were, it feems, Predecessors to those who are now called Free-thinkers; which Name being too general and indefinite, inafmuch as it comprehends all those who think for themselves, whether they agree in Opinion with these Gentlemen or no, it shou'd not seem amiss to assign them a specific Appellation or peculiar Name, whereby to distinguish them from other Philosophers, at least in our present Conference. For I cannot bear to argue against Free-thinking and Freethinkers. ALC. In the Eyes of a wife Man Words are of small Moment. We do not think Truth attached to a Name. EUPH. If you please then, to avoid Confusion, let us call your Sect by the same Name that Tully (who understood the force of Language) bestow'd upon them. ALC. With

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all my Heart. Pray what may that Name DIAL. be? EUPH. Why, he calls them Minute Philosophers. Right, faid Crito, the modern Free-thinkers are the very same with those Cicero called Minute Philosophers, which Name admirably fuits them, they being a fort of Sect which diminish all the most valuable things, the Thoughts, Views, and Hopes of Men; all the Knowledge, Notions, and Theories of the Mind they reduce to Sense; Humane Nature they contract and degrade to the narrow low Standard of Animal Life, and affign us only a fmall Pittance of Time instead of Immortality. phron very gravely remarked, That the Gentlemen of his Sect had done no Injury to Man; and that if he be a little, shortlived, contemptible Animal, it was not their faying it made him fo: And they were no more to blame for whatever Defects they discover, than a faithful Glass for making the Wrinkles which it only shews. As to what you observe, faid he, of those we now call Freethinkers, having been anciently termed Minute Philosophers, it is my opinion this Appellation might be derived from their confidering things minutely, and not swallowing them in the gross, as other Men are used to do. Besides, we all

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I. discern the minutest Objects: It seems therefore, that Minute Philosophers might have been so called from their distinguished Perspicacity. EUPH. O Alciphron! these Minute Philosophers (since that is their true Name) are a sort of Pirates who plunder all that come in their way. I consider my self as a Man left stript and desolate on a bleak Beach.

XI. But who are these profound and learned Men that of late Years have demolished the whole Fabric, which Lawgivers, Philosophers, and Divines, had been erecting for so many Ages? Lysicles hearing these Words, smiled, and said he believed Euphranor had figured to himself Philosophers in square Caps and long Gowns; but, thanks to these happy Times, the Reign of Pedantry was over. Our Philosophers, faid he, are of a very different Kind from those aukward Students, who think to come at Knowledge by poring on dead Languages, and old Authors, or by fequestring themselves from the Cares of the World to meditate in Solitude and Retirement. They are the best bred Men of the Age, Men who know the World, Men of Pleafure, Men of Fashion, and fine Gentlemen.

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EUPH. I have some small Notion of DIAL. the People you mention, but shou'd never have taken them for Philosophers. CRI. Nor would any one else till of The World it feems was long under a Mistake about the way to Knowledge, thinking it lay through a tedious Course of Academical Education and Study. But among the Discoveries of the present Age, one of the principal is, the finding out that fuch a Method doth rather retard and obstruct, than promote Knowledge. ALC. Academical Study may be comprised in two Points, Reading and Meditation. Their Reading is chiefly employ'd on ancient Authors in dead Languages: fo that a great Part of their Time is spent in learning Words; which, when they have mastered with infinite pains, what do they get by it but old and obfolete Notions, that are now quite exploded and out of use? Then, as to their Meditations, what can they possibly be good for? He that wants the proper Materials of Thought, may think and meditate for ever to no purpose: Those Cobwebs spun by Scholars out of their own Brains being alike unserviceable, either for Use or Ornament. Proper Ideas or Materials are only to be got by frequenting good Company.

DIAL pany. I know feveral Gentlemen, who, fince their Appearance in the World, have fpent as much time in rubbing off the Rust and Pedantry of a College-Education, as they had done before in acquiring it. LYS. I'll undertake, a Lad of Fourteen, bred in the modern way, shall make a better Figure, and be more confidered in any Drawing-Room or Affembly of polite People, than one of Fourand-twenty, who hath lain by a long time at School and College. He shall fay better things, in a better manner, and be more liked by good Judges. EUPH. Where doth he pick up all this Improvement? CRI. Where our grave Ancestors wou'd never have look'd for it, in a Drawing-Room, a Coffee-House, a Chocolate - House, at the Tayern, or Groom-Porter's. In these and the like fashionable Places of Resort, it is the Custom for polite Persons to speak freely on all Subjects, religious, moral, or political. So that a young Gentleman who frequents them is in the way of hearing many instructive Lectures, seafoned with Wit and Raillery, and uttered with Spirit. Three or four Sentences from a Man of Quality spoke with a good Air, make more Impression, and convey more Knowledge, than a dozen

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Differtations in a dry Academical way. DIAL. EUPH. There is then no Method or Course of Studies in those Places. LYS. None but an easy free Conversation, which takes in every thing that offers, without any Rule or Defign. EUPH. I always thought that fome Order was necessary to attain any useful degree of Knowledge; that Hafte and Confusion begat a conceited Ignorance; that to make our Advances fure, they shou'd be gradual, and those Points first learned which might cast a Light on what was to follow. ALC. So long as Learning was to be obtained only by that flow formal course of Study, few of the better fort knew much of it; but now it is grown an Amusement, our young Gentry and Nobility imbibe it infenfibly amidst their Diversions, and make a confiderable Progress. EUPH. Hence probably the great number of Minute Philosophers. CRI. It is to this that Sect is owing for fo many ingenious Proficients of both Sexes. You may now commonly fee (what no former Age ever faw) a young Lady, or a Petit Maitre nonplus a Divine or an oldfashioned Gentleman, who hath read many a Greek and Latin Author, and spent much Time in hard methodical Study. EUPH. It shou'd seem then that Me-D.3

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DIAL. thod, Exactness, and Industry are a Disadvantage. Here Alcipbron, turning to Lysicles, said he could make the Point very clear, if Euphranor had any Notion of Painting. EUPH. I never faw a first-rate Picture in my Life, but have a tolerable Collection of Prints, and have feen fome good Drawings. ALC. You know then the difference between the Dutch and the Italian manner. EUPH. I have some Notion of it. ALC. Suppose now a Drawing finished by the nice and laborious Touches of a Dutch Pencil, and another off-hand scratched out in the free manner of a great Italian Master. The Dutch Piece, which hath cost so much Pains and Time, will be exact indeed, but without that Force, Spirit, or Grace, which appear in the other, and are the Effects of an easy free Pencil. Do but apply this, and the Point will be clear. EUPH. Pray inform me, did those great Italian Masters begin and proceed in their Art without any choice of Method or Subject, and always draw with the same Ease and Or did they observe some Freedom? Method, beginning with fimple and elementary Parts, an Eye, a Nose, a Finger, which they drew with great Pains and Care, often drawing the fame thing, in order

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in ler order to draw it correctly, and fo pro-DIAL. ceeding with Patience and Industry, till after a confiderable length of Time they arrived at the free masterly manner you speak of. If this were the Case, I leave you to make the Application. ALC. You may dispute the Matter if you please. But a Man of Parts is one thing, and a Pedant another. Pains and Method may do for fome fort of People. A Man must be a long time kindling wet Straw into a vile smothering Flame, but Spirits blaze out at once. EUPH. The Minute Philosophers have, it feems, better Parts than other Men, which qualifies them for a different Education. ALC. Tell me, Euphranor, what is it that gives one Man a better Mien than another; more Politeness in Dress, Speech, and Motion? Nothing but frequenting good Company. By the same means Men get insensibly a delicate Taste, a refined Judgment, a certain Politeness in thinking and expressing one's felf. No wonder if you Countrymen are strangers to the Advantage of polite Conversation, which constantly keeps the Mind awake and active, exercifing its Faculties, and calling forth all its Strength and Spirit on a thousand different Occasions and Subjects, that never came in the way of a Book-worm in a College, no more

DIAL. more than of a Ploughman. CRI. Hence I. those lively Faculties, that Quickness of Apprehension, that Slyness of Ridicule, that egregious Talent of Wit and Humour, which diftinguish the Gentlemen of your Profession. EUPH. It should seem then that your Sect is made up of what you call fine Gentlemen. LYS. Not altogether, for we have among us fome contemplative Spirits of a coarser Education; who, from observing the Behaviour and Proceedings of Apprentices, Watermen, Pc ers, and the Assemblies of Rabble in the Streets, have arrived at a profound Knowledge of Humane Nature; and made great Discoveries about the Principles, Springs, and Motives of moral Actions. These have demolished the received Sys-

tems, and done a world of good in the City. ALC. I tell you we have Men of all Sorts and Professions, plodding Citizens, thriving Stockjobbers, skilful Men in Business, polite Courtiers, gallant Men

of the Army; but our chief Strength and Flower of the Flock are those promising young Men who have the Advantage of a

modern Education. These are the growing Hopes of our Sect, by whose Credit and Influence in a few Years we expect to see those

great things accomplished that we have in view. EUPH. I cou'd never have

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ve ed imagined your Sect fo confiderable. ALC. DIAL. There are in England many honest Folk I. as much in the dark about these Matters as your self.

XII. To judge of the prevailing Opinion among People of Fashion, by what a Senator faith in the House, a Judge upon the Bench, or a Priest in the Pulpit, who all speak according to Law, that is, to the reverend Prejudices of our Forefathers, would be wrong. You should go into good Company, and mind what Men of Parts and Breeding fay, those who are best heard and most admired, as well in public Places of Refort, as in private Vifits. He only who hath these Opportunities, can know our real Strength, our Numbers, and the Figure that we make. EUPH. By your Account, there must be many Minute Philosophers among the Men of Rank and Fortune. ALC. Take my word for it, not a few, and they do much contribute to the spreading our For he who knows the World Notions. must observe, that Fashions constantly descend. It is therefore the right way to propagate an Opinion from the upper end. Not to fay that the Patronage of fuch Men is an Encouragement to our Authors. EUPH. I.

DIAL. EUPH. It seems then you have Authors among you. LYS. That we have, feveral, and those very great Men, who have obliged the World with many useful and profound Discoveries. CRI. Moschon, for instance, hath proved that Man and Beast are really of the same Nature: That confequently a Man need only indulge his Senses and Appetites to be as happy as a Brute. Gorgias hath gone further, demonstrating Man to be a Piece of Clockwork, or Machine; and that Thought or Reason are the same thing as the Impulse of one Ball against another. Cimon hath made noble use of these Discoveries, proving as clearly as any Proposition in Mathematics, That Conscience is a Whim, and Morality a Prejudice; and that a Man is no more accountable for his Actions than a Clock is for striking. Tryphon hath written irrefragably on the Ulefulness of Vice. Thrasenor hath confuted the foolish Prejudice Men had against Atheism, shewing, that a Republick of Atheists might live very happily together. Demylus hath made a Jest of Loyalty, and convinced the World there is nothing in it: To him and another Philosopher of the same Stamp this Age is indebted for discovering, that Public Spirit is an idle Enthusiasm which feizeth

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seizeth only on weak Minds. It would be DIAL. endless to recount the Discoveries made by Writers of this Sect. LYS. But the Master-piece and finishing Stroke is a learned Anecdote of our great Diagoras, containing a Demonstration against the Being of God; which it is conceived the Public is not yet ripe for. am affured by fome judicious Friends who have feen it, that it is as clear as Daylight, and will do a world of Good, at one Blow demolishing the whole System of Religion. These Discoveries are published by our Philosophers, sometimes in just Volumes, but often in Pamphlets and loose Papers for their readier Conveyance through the Kingdom. And to them must be ascribed that absolute and independent Freedom, which groweth fo fast, to the Terror of all Bigots. Even the Dull and Ignorant begin to open their Eyes, and to be influenced by the Example and Authority of fo many ingenious Men. EUPH. It shou'd seem by this Account that your Sect extend their Discoveries beyond Religion; and that Loyalty to his Prince, or Reverence for the Laws, are but mean things in the Eye of a Minute Philosopher. LYS. Very mean; we are too wife to think there is any thing Sacred either in King or Constitution, or indeed

DIAL. indeed in any thing elfe. A Man of Sense may perhaps feem to pay an occasional Regard to his Prince, but this is no more at bottom than what he pays to God when he kneels at the Sacrament to qualify himself for an Office. Fear God, and honour the King, are a pair of flavish Maxims, which had for a long time crampt Humane Nature, and awed not only weak Minds, but even Men of good Understanding, till their Eyes, as I observed before, were opened by our Philoso-EUPH. Methinks I can eafily comprehend, that when the Fear of God is quite extinguished, the Mind must be very easy with respect to other Duties, which become outward Pretences and Formalities, from the Moment that they quit their hold upon the Conscience: and Conscience always supposeth the Being of a God. But I still thought that Englishmen of all Denominations (how widely foever they might differ as to some particular Points) agreed in the Belief of a God, and of so much at least as is called Natural Religion. ALC. I have already told you my own Opinion of those Matters, and what I know to be the Opinion of many more. CRI. Probably, Euphranor, by the Title of Deists, which is sometimes given to Minute Philosophers, you have been

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been missed to imagine they believe and DIAL. worship a God according to the Light of Nature: but by living among them, you may foon be convinced of the contrary. They have neither Time, nor Place, nor Form of Divine Worship: They offer neither Prayers nor Praises to God in Public: and in their private Practice shew a Contempt or Dislike even of the Duties of Natural Religion. For instance, the faying Grace before and after Meals is a plain Point of Natural Worship, and was once universally practifed; but in proportion as this Sect prevailed it hath been laid aside, not only by the Minute Philofophers themselves, who would be infinitely ashamed of such a Weakness as to beg God's Bleffing, or give God Thanks for their daily Food; but also by others who are afraid of being thought Fools by the Minute Philosophers. EUPH. Is it posfible that Men, who really believe a God, should yet decline paying so easy and reafonable a Duty for fear of incurring the Contempt of Atheists? CRI. I tell you there are many, who believing in their Hearts the Truth of Religion, are yet afraid or ashamed to own it, lest they should forfeit their Reputation with those who have the good luck to pass for great Wits

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DIAL. Wits and Men of Genius. ALC. O Euphraner, we must make Allowance for ~ Crito's Prejudice: he is a worthy Gentleman, and means well. But doth it not look like Prejudice, to ascribe the Respect that is paid our ingenious Free-thinkers rather to good Luck than to Merit? EUPH. I acknowledge their Merit to be very wonderful, and that those Authors must needs be great Men who are able to prove fuch Paradoxes: for Example, That fo knowing a Man as a Minute Philosopher should be a meer Machine, or at best no better than a Brute. ALC. It is a true Maxim, That a Man should think with the Learned, and fpeak with the Vulgar. I should be loth to place a Gentleman of Merit in fuch a Light, before prejudiced and ignorant Men. The Tenets of our Philosophy have this in common with many other Truths, in Metaphysics, Geometry, Astronomy, and Natural Philosophy, that vulgar Ears can-All our Discoveries and not bear them. Notions are in themselves true and certain; but they are at present known only to the better fort, and would found strange and odd among the Vulgar. this, it is to be hoped, will wear off

that vulgar Minds should be startled at

EUPH. I do not wonder

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the Notions of your Philosophy. CRI. DIAL.
Truly a very curious fort of Philosophy, I.
and much to be admired!

XIII. The profound Thinkers of this Way have taken a direct contrary Course to all the great Philosophers of former Ages, who made it their Endeavour to raise and refine Humane Kind, and remove it as far as possible from the Brute; to moderate and subdue Mens Appetites; to remind them of the Dignity of their Nature; to awaken and improve their fuperior Faculties, and direct them to the noblest Objects; to possess Mens Minds with a high Sense of the Divinity, of the supreme Good, and the Immortality of the Soul. They took great pains to strengthen the Obligations to Virtue; and upon all those Subjects have wrought out noble Theories, and treated with fingular Force of Reason. But it seems our Minute Philosophers act the reverse of all other wise and thinking Men; it being their End and Aim to erafe the Principles of all that is great and good from the Mind of Man, to unhinge all Order of civil Life, to undermine the Foundations of Morality, and, instead of improving and ennobling our Natures, to bring us down to the Maxims and way of thinking DIAL of the most uneducated and barbatous Nations; and even to degrade Humane Kind to a level with brute Beafts. all the while they would pass upon the World for Men of deep Knowledge. But in effect, what is all this negative Knowledge better than downright favage Ignorance? That there is no Providence, no Spirit, no future State, no moral Duty: truly a fine System for an honest Man to own, or an ingenious Man to value himfelf upon! Alciphron, who heard this Discourse with some Uneasiness, very gravely replied. Disputes are not to be decided by the Weight of Authority, but by the Force of Reason. You may pass, indeed, general Reflexions on our Notions, and call them brutal and barbarous if you But it is fuch Brutality and fuch Barbarism as few could have attained to. if Men of the greatest Genius had not broke the Ice; there being nothing more difficult than to get the better of Education, and conquer old Prejudices. To remove and cast off a heap of Rubbish that has been gathering upon the Soul from our very Infancy, requires great Courage, and great Strength of Faculties. Our Philosophers therefore do well deferve the Name of Esprits forts, Men of strong Heads, Free-thinkers, and such like AppelAp Lill He pre rep and Orn vefi due of Bea feet

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Appellations, betokening great Force and DIAL. Liberty of Mind. It is very possible, the Heroic Labours of these Men may be represented (for what is not capable of Misrepresentation?) as a piratical plundering and stripping the Mind of its Wealth and Ornaments; when it is in truth the divefting it only of its Prejudices, and reducing it to its untainted original State of Nature. Oh Nature! the genuine Beauty of pure Nature! EUPH. You feem very much taken with the Beauty of Nature. Be pleased to tell me, Alciphron, what those things are which you esteem natural, or by what Mark I may know them.

XIV. ALC. For a thing to be natural, for instance, to the Mind of Man, it must appear originally therein, it must be univerfally in all Men, it must be invariably the same in all Nations and Ages. Limitations of Original, Universal, and Invariable, exclude all those Notions found in the Humane Mind, which are the Effect of Custom and Education. The Case is the same with respect to all other Species of Beings. A Cat, for Example, hath a natural Inclination to pursue a Mouse, because it agrees with the forementioned Marks. But if a Cat be taught VOL. I. E to Dra L. to play Tricks, you will not fay those Tricks are natural. For the same Reason, I. if upon a Plumbtree, Peaches and Apricots are ingrafted, no body will fay they are the natural Growth of the Plumbtree. EUPH. But to return to Man: It feems you allow those things alone to be natural to him, which shew themselves upon his first Entrance into the World; to wit, the Senses, and such Passions and Appetites as are discovered upon the first application of their respective Objects. ALC. That is EUPH. Tell me, Alcimy Opinion. phron, if from a young Appletree, after a certain Period of Time, there should shoot forth Leaves, Bloffoms, and Apples; would you deny these things to be natural, because they did not discover and display then class in the tender Bud? ALC. I would not. EUPH. And suppose that in Man, after a certain Season, the Appetite of Lust, or the Faculty of Reason shall shoot forth, open, and display themselves, as Leaves and Bloffoms do in a Tree; would you therefore deny them to be natural to him, because they did not appear in his original Infancy? ALC. I acknowledge I would not. EUPH. It feems therefore, that the first Mark of a thing's being natural to the Mind was not warily laid down by you; to wit, that it should appear

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appear originally in it. ALC. It feems DIAL. fo. EUPH. Again, inform me, Alciphron, whether you do not think it natural for an Orange-plant to produce Oranges? ALC. I do. EUPH. But plant it in the North-end of Great-Britain, and it shall with care produce, perhaps, a good Sallad: in the Southern parts of the fame Island, it may with much Pains and Culture thrive and produce indifferent Fruit: but in Portugal, or Naples, it will produce much better, with little or no pains. this true, or not? ALC. It is true. EUPH. The Plant being the same in all Places, doth not produce the fame Fruit; Sun, Soil, and Cultivation making a difference. ALC. I grant it. EUPH. And fince the Case is, you say, the same with respect to all Species; why may we not conclude, by a parity of Reason, that things may be natural to Humane Kind, and yet neither found in all Men, nor invariably the same where they are found? ALC. Hold, Euphranor, you must explain your felf further. I shall not be over hasty in my Concessions. LYS. You are in the right, Alciphron, to stand upon your guard. I do not like these ensnaring Questions. EUPH. I defire you to make no Concesfions in complaifance to me, but only to tell me your Opinion upon each Particular, E 2

Di AL. that we may understand one another, know wherein we agree, and proceed jointly in finding out the Truth. But (added Euphranor, turning to Crito and me) if the Gentlemen are against a free and fair Inquiry, I shall give them no further Trou-ALC. Our Opinions will stand the ble. Test. We fear no Trial; proceed as you EUPH. It feems then that from please. what you have granted it should follow, Things may be natural to Men, although they do not actually shew themfelves in all Men, nor in equal Perfection; there being as great difference of Culture, and every other Advantage, with respect to Humane Nature, as is to be found with respect to the vegetable Nature of Plants; to use your own Similitude. Is it fo, or not? ALC. It is. EUPH. Answer me, Alciphron, do not Men in all Times and Places, when they arrive at a certain Age, express their Thoughts by Speech? ALC. They do. EUPH. Should it not feem then, that Language is natural? ALC. It should. EUPH. And yet there is a great variety of Languages. ALC. I acknowledge there is. EUPH. From all this will it not follow, a thing may be natural and yet admit of Variety? ALC. I grant it will. EUPH. Should it not feem therefore to follow, that a thing may be natural

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to Mankind, though it have not those DIAL. Marks or Conditions affigned; though it be not original, universal and invariable? ALC. It should. EUPH. And that confequently religious Worship and civil Government may be natural to Man, notwithstanding they admit of fundry Forms and different Degrees of Perfection? ALC. It feems fo. EUPH. You have granted already that Reason is natural to Mankind. ALC. I have. EUPH. Whatever therefore is agreeable to Reason is agreeable to the Nature of Man. ALC. It is. EUPH. Will it not follow from hence that Truth and Virtue are natural to Man? ALC. Whatever is reasonable I admit to be natural. EUPH. And as those Fruits, which grow from the most generous and mature Stock, in the choicest Soil, and with the best Culture, are most esteemed; even fo ought we not to think, those sublime Truths, which are the Fruits of mature Thought, and have been rationally deduced by Men of the best and most improved Understandings, to be the choicest Productions of the rational Nature of Man? And if so, being in Fact reasonable, natural and true, they ought not to be esteemed unnatural Whims, Errors of Education, and groundless Prejudices, because they are raifed, and forwarded, by manuring E 3 and

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DIAL. and cultivating our tender Minds: Because they take early Root, and sprout forth betimes, by the Care and Diligence of our Instructors. ALC. Agreed, provided still they may be rationally deduced. But to take this for granted, of what Men vulgarly call the Truths of Morality and Religion, would be begging the Question. EUPH. You are in the right; I do not, therefore, take for granted, that they are rationally deduced: I only suppose that, if they are, they must be allowed natural to Man, or in other Words agreeable to, and growing from, the most excellent and peculiar Part of Humane Nature. ALC. I have nothing to object to this. EUPH. What shall we think then of your former Affertions? That nothing is natural to Man but what may be found in all Men, in all Nations and Ages of the World: That to obtain a genuine View of Humane Nature, we must extirpate all the Effects of Education and Instruction, and regard only the Senses, Appetites, and Paffions, which are to be found originally in all Mankind: That, therefore, the Notion of a God can have no Foundation in Nature, as not being originally in the Mind, nor the same in all Men. pleased to reconcile these Things with your late Concessions, which the Force of

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of Truth seems to have extorted from DIAL. you. I.

XV. ALC. Tell me, Euphranor, whether Truth be not one and the fame uniform invariable Thing: And, if fo, whether the many different and inconfiftent Notions which Men entertain of God and Duty be not a plain Proof there is no Truth in them. EUPH. That Truth is constant and uniform I freely own, and that consequently Opinions repugnant to each other cannot be true: But I think it will not hence follow they are all alike false. If among various Opinions about the fame Thing, one be grounded on clear and evident Reasons; is to be thought true, and others only fo far as they confift with it. Reason is the fame, and rightly applied will lead to the fame Conclusions in all Times and Places. Socrates, two thousand Years ago, seems to have reasoned himself into the same Notion of a God, which is entertained by the Philosophers of our Days, if you will allow that Name to any who are not of your Sect. And the Remark of Confucius, That a Man should guard in his Youth against Lust, in Manhood against Faction, and in old Age against Coverousness, is as current Morality in Europe as

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DIAL. in China. ALC. But still it would be a Satisfaction if all Men thought the same Way, Difference of Opinions implying Uncertainty. EUPH. Tell me, Alciphron, what you take to be the Cause of a Lunar Eclipse. ALC. The Shadow of the Earth interposing between the Sun and Moon. EUPH. Are you affured of this? ALC. Undoubtedly. EUPH. Are all Mankind agreed in this Truth? ALC. By no Means. Ignorant and barbarous People affign different ridiculous Causes of this Appear-EUPH. It feems then there are different Opinions about the Nature of an Eclipse. ALC. There are. EUPH. And nevertheleless one of these Opinions is true. ALC. It is. EUPH. Diverfity, therefore, of Opinions about a Thing doth not hinder, but that Thing may be, and one of the Opinions concerning it may be true. ALC. I acknowledge it. EUPH. It should seem, therefore, that your Argument against the Belief of a God from the Variety of Opinions about his Nature is not conclusive. Nor do I see how you can conclude against the Truth of any moral or religious Tenet, from the various Opinions of Men upon the same Subject. Might not a Man as well argue, that no historical Account of a Matter of Fact can be true, when different Relations

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ons are are given of it? Or may we not as well DIAL. infer, that because the several Sects of Philosophy maintain different Opinions, none of them can be in the right, not even the Minute Philosophers themselves? During this Conversation Lyficles seemed uneafy, like one that wished in his Heart there was no God. Alcipbron, faid he, methinks you fit by very tamely, while Euphranor faps the Foundation of our Tenets. Be of good Courage, replied Alciphron, a skilful Gamester has been known to ruin his Adversary, by yielding him some Advantage at first. I am glad, said he, turning to Euphranor, that you are drawn in to argue and make your Appeals to Reafon. For my part, wherever Reason leads, I shall not be afraid to follow. Know then, Euphranor, that I freely give up what you now contend for. I do not value the Success of a few crude Notions thrown out in a loofe Discourse, any more than the Turks do the Loss of that vile Infantry they place in the Front of their Armies, for no other End but to waste the Powder, and blunt the Swords of their Enemies. Be affured, I have in referve a Body of otherguess Arguments, which I am ready to produce. I will undertake to prove. ---- EUPH. O Alcipbron! I do not doubt your Faculty of proving. But

I. any farther Proofs, I should be glad to know whether the Notions of your Minute Philosophy are worth proving. I mean, whether they are of Use and Service to Mankind?

XVI. ALC. As to that, give me leave to tell you, a Thing may be useful to one Man's Views, and not to another's: But Truth is Truth whether useful or not, and must not be measured by the Convenience of this or that Man, or Party of EUPH. But is not the general Good of Mankind to be regarded as a Rule or Measure of moral Truths, of all fuch Truths as direct or influence the moral Actions of Men? ALC. That Point is not clear to me. I know, indeed, that Legislators, and Divines, and Politicians have always alledged, That it is necessary to the welbeing of Mankind, that they should be kept in Awe by the slavish Notions of Religion and Morality. granting all this, how will it prove these Notions to be true? Convenience is one Thing, and Truth is another. A genuine Philosopher, therefore, will overlook all Advantages, and confider only Truth it felf as fuch. EUPH. Tell me, Alcipbron, is your genuine Philosopher a wise Man,

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or a Fool? ALC. Without Question, DIAL. the wifest of Men. EUPH. Which is to be thought the wife Man, he who acts with defign, or he who acts at random? ALC. He who actswith defign. EUPH. Whoever acts with design, acts for fome End. Doth he not? ALC. He doth. EUPH. And a wife Man for ALC. True. EUPH. And a good End? he sheweth his Wisdom, in making choice of fit Means to obtain his End. ALC. I acknowledge it. EUPH. By how much, therefore, the End proposed is more excellent, and by how much fitter the Means employed are to obtain it, fo much the wifer is the Agent to be esteemed. ALC. This feems to be true. EUPH. Can a rational Agent propose a more excellent End than Happiness? ALC. He EUPH. Of good Things, the greater Good is most excellent. ALC. Doubtless. EUPH. Is not the general Happiness of Mankind a greater Good, than the private Happiness of one Man, or of some certain Men? ALC. It is EUPH. Is it not, therefore, the most excellent End? ALC. It feems fo. EUPH. Are not then those who pursue this End by the properest Methods to be thought the wifest Men? ALC. I grant they EUPH. Which is a wife Man governed

DIAL. governed by, wife or foolish Notions? ALC. By wife, doubtless. EUPH. It feems then to follow, that he who promotes the general welbeing of Mankind by the proper necessary Means, is truly wife, and acts upon wife Grounds. ALC. It should seem so. EUPH. And is not Folly of an opposite Nature to Wisdom? ALC. It is. EUPH. Might it not therefore be inferred, that those Men are foolish who go about to unhinge such Principles as have a necessary Connexion with the general Good of Mankind? ALC. Perhaps this might be granted: But at the fame Time I must observe, that it is in my power to deny it. EUPH. How! you will not furely deny the Conclusion, when you admit the Premifes. ALC. I would fain know upon what Terms we argue; whether, in this Progress of Question and Answer, if a Man makes a Slip it be utterly irretrievable? For if you are on the catch to lay Hold of every Advantage, without allowing for Surprise or Inattention, I must tell you this is not the Way to convince my Judgment. EUPH. O Alciphron! I aim not at Triumph, but at Truth. You are therefore at full Liberry to unravel all that hath been faid, and to recover or correct any Slip you have made. But then

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then you must distinctly point it out: DIAL. otherwise it will be impossible ever to arrive at any Conclusion. ALC. I agree with you upon these Terms jointly to proceed in fearch of Truth, for to that I am fincerely devoted. In the Progress of our present Inquiry I was, it seems, guilty of an Overfight, in acknowledging the general Happiness of Mankind to be a greater Good than the particular Happiness of one Man. For in Fact, the individual Happiness of every Man alone constitutes his own entire Good. Happiness of other Men making no part of mine, is not with respect to me a Good: I mean a true natural Good. cannot therefore be a reasonable End to be proposed by me in Truth and Nature. (for I do not speak of political Pretences) fince no wife Man will purfue an End which doth not concern him. This is the Voice of Nature. Oh Nature! thou art the Fountain, Original, and Pattern of all that is Good and Wife. EUPH. You would like then to follow Nature, and propose her as a Guide and Pattern for your Imitation. ALC. Of all Things. EUPH. Whence do you gather this Respect for Nature? ALC. From the Excellency of her Productions. EUPH. In a Vegetable, for Instance, you say there

DIAL is Use and Excellency, because the several Parts of it are so connected and fitted to each other, as to protect and nourish the whole, make the Individual grow, and propagate the Kind, and because in its Fruits or Qualities it is adapted to please the Sense, or contribute to the Benefit of ALC. Even fo. EUPH. In like manner, do you not infer the Excellency of Animal Bodies from observing the Frame and Fitness of their several Parts, by which they mutually conspire to the welbeing of each other as well as of the whole? Do you not also observe a natural Union and Confent between Animals of the fame Kind, and that even different Kinds of Animals have certain Qualities and Instincts whereby they contribute to the Exercise, Nourishment, and Delight of each other? Even the inanimate unorganized Elements feem to have an Excellence relative to each other. was the Excellency of Water, if it did not cause Herbs and Vegetables to spring from the Earth, and put forth Flowers and Fruits? And what would become of the Beauty of the Earth, if it was not warmed by the Sun, moistened by Water, and fanned by Air? Throughout the whole System of the visible and natural World, do you not perceive a mutual Connexion

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and Correspondence of Parts? And is it DIAL. not from hence that you frame an Idea of the Perfection, and Order, and Beauty of Nature? ALC. All this I grant. EUPH. And have not the Stoics heretofore faid, (who were no more Bigots than you are) and did you not your felf fay, this Pattern of Order was worthy the Imitation of rational Agents? ALC. I do not deny this to be true. EUPH. Ought we not therefore to infer the same Union, Order, and Regularity in the moral World that we perceive to be in the natural? ALC. We ought. EUPH. Should it not therefore feem to follow that reafonable Creatures were, at the Philofophical Emperor * observes, made one for another; and consequently that Man ought not to confider himself as an independent Individual, whose Happiness is not connected with that of other Men; but rather as the part of a whole, to the common Good of which he ought to conspire, and order his Ways and Actions fuitably, if he would live according to Nature? ALC. Supposing this to be true, what then? EUPH. Will it not follow, that a wife Man should consider and purfue his private Good, with regard to, and

^{*} M. Antonin. l. 4.

DIAL, in conjunction with, that of other Men? in granting of which, you thought your felf guilty of an Overfight. Though, indeed, the Sympathy of Pain and Pleasure. and the mutual Affections by which Mankind are knit together, have been always allowed a plain Proof of this Point: And though it was the constant Doctrine of those, who were esteemed the wifest and most thinking Men among the Ancients, as the Platonists, Peripatetics, and Stoics: to fay nothing of Christians, whom you pronounce to be an unthinking prejudiced fort of People. ALC. I shall not dispute this Point with you. EUPH. Since therefore we are fo far agreed, should it not feem to follow from the Premises: That the belief of a God, of a future State, and of moral Duties, are the only wife, right, and genuine Principles of Humane Conduct, in case they have a neceffary Connexion with the welbeing of Mankind? This Conclusion you have been led to by your own Concessions, and by the Analogy of Nature. ALC. I have been drawn into it step by step through feveral Preliminaries, which I cannot well call to mind; but one thing I observe, that you build on the necessary Connexion those Principles have with the welbeing of Mankind: which is a Point neither proved

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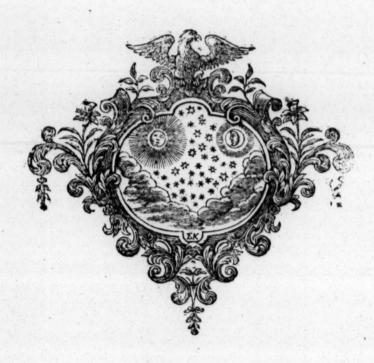
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proved nor granted. LYS. This I take DIAL. to be a grand fundamental Prejudice, as I I. doubt not, if I had time I could make appear. But it is now late, and we will, if you think fit, defer this Subject till Tomorrow. Upon which Motion of Lysicles we put an end to our Conversation for that Evening.



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DIAL.



THE SECOND DIALOGUE.

I. Vulgar Error, That Vice is burtful. II. The Benefit of Drunkenness, Gaming, and Whoring. III. Prejudice against Vice wearing off. IV. Its Usefulness illustrated in the Instances of Callicles and Telefilla. V. The Reasoning of Lysicles in behalf of Vice examined. VI. Wrong to punish Actions when the Doctrines whence they flow are tolerated. VII. Hazardous Experiment of the Minute Philosophers. VIII. Their Doctrine of Circulation and Revolution. IX. Their Sense of a Reformation. X. Riches alone not the Public Weal. IX. Authority of Minute Philosophers: their Prejudice against Religion. XII. Effects of Luxury: Virtue, whether notional? XIII. Pleasure of Sense. XIV. What sort of Pleasure most natural to Man. XV. Dignity of Humane Nature. XVI. Pleasure mistaken. XVII. Amusements, Misery, and Cowardise of Minute Philosophers. XVIII. Rakes cannot reckon. XIX. Abilities and Success of Minute Philosophers. XX. Happy Effects of the Minute Philosophy in particular

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ticular Instances. XXI. Their free No-DIALtions about Government. XXII. England II.
the proper Soil for Minute Philosophy.
XXIII. The Policy and Address of its
Professors. XXIV. Merit of Minute
Philosophers towards the Public. XXV.
Their Notions and Character. XXVI.
Their Tendency towards Popery and
Slavery.

I. EXT Morning, Alciphron and Lyficles said, the Weather was so fine, they had a mind to spend the Day abroad, and

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take a cold Dinner under a Shade in some pleasant Part of the Country. Whereupon, after Breakfast, we went down to a Beach about half a Mile off; where we walked on the fmooth Sand, with the Ocean on one Hand, and on the other wild broken Rocks, intermixed with shady Trees and Springs of Water, till the Sun began to be uneafy. We then withdrew into a hollow Glade, between two Rocks, where we had no fooner feated our selves, but Lysicles, addressing himself to Euphranor, said: I am now ready to perform what I undertook last Evening, which was to shew, there is nothing in that necessary Connexion which some Men imagine between those Principles F 2 you

II.

DIAL, you contend for, and the public Good. I freely own, that if this Qustion was to be decided by the Authority of Legislators or Philosophers, it must go against us. For those Men generally take it for granted, that Vice is pernicious to the Public; and that Men cannot be kept from Vice but by the Fear of God, and the Sense of a future State; whence they are induced to think the Belief of fuch Things neceffary to the welbeing of humane Kind. This false Notion hath prevailed for many Ages in the World, and done an infinite Deal of Mischief, being in Truth the Cause of religious Establishments, and gaining the Protection and Encouragement of Laws and Magistrates to the Clergy and their Superstitions. Even fome of the wifest among the Ancients, who agreed with our Sect in denying a Providence, and the Immortality of the Soul, had nevertheless the Weakness to lie under the common Prejudice that Vice was hurtful to Societies of Men. But England hath of late produced great Philosophers who have undeceived the World, and proved to a Demonstration that private Vices are public Benefits. This Discovery was reserved to our Times, and our Sect hath the Glory of it. CRI. It is possible some Men of fine Understand-

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ing might in former Ages have had a DIAL. Glimpse of this important Truth: But it may be prefumed they lived in ignorant Times and bigoted Countries, which were not ripe for fuch a Discovery. LYS. Men of narrow Capacities and short Sight, being able to see no further than one Link in a Chain of Consequences, are shocked at fmall Evils which attend upon Vice. But those who can enlarge their View, and look thro' a long Series of Events, may behold Happiness resulting from Vice, and Good springing out of Evil, in a thoufand Instances. To prove my Point, I shall not trouble you with Authorities, or far-fetch'd Arguments, but bring you to plain Matter of Fact. Do but take a View of each particular Vice, and trace it through its Effects and Consequences, and then you will clearly perceive the Advantage it brings to the Public.

II. Drunkenness, for Instance, is by your sober Moralists thought a pernicious Vice; but it is for Want of considering the good Effects that flow from it. For, in the first Place, it increases the Malt Tax, a principal Branch of his Majesty's Revenue, and thereby promotes the Safety, Strength, and Glory of the Nation. Secondly, it employs a great Number of Hands.

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DIAL. Hands, the Brewer, the Maltster, the Ploughman, the Dealer in Hops, the Smith, the Carpenter, the Brasier, the Joiner, with all other Artificers necessary to supply those enumerated, with their respective Instruments and Utenfils. All which Advantages are procured from Drunkenness, in the vulgar Way, by strong Beer. This Point is fo clear it will admit of no Dispute. But while you are forced to allow thus much, I forfee you are ready to object against Drunkenness occasioned by Wine and Spirits, as exporting Wealth into foreign Countries. But you do not reflect on the Number of Hands which even this fets on Work at home: The Distillers, the Vintners, the Merchants, the Sailors, the Shipwrights, with all those who are employed towards victualling and fitting out Ships, which, upon a nice Computation, will be found to include an incredible Variety of Trades and Callings. Then for freighting our Ships, to answer these foreign Importations, all our Manufactures throughout the Kingdom are employed, the Spinners, the Weavers, the Dyers, the Wool-Combers, the Carriers, the Packers: And the same may be faid of many other Manufactures, as well as the Woollen. And if it be further confidered, how many Men are enrich-

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enriched by all the forementioned Ways DIAL. of Trade and Business, and the Expences of these Men, and their Families, in all the feveral Articles of convenient and fashionable Living, whereby all Sorts of Trades and Callings, not only at home, but throughout all Parts wherever our Commerce reaches, are kept in Employment; you will be amazed at the wonderfully extended Scene of Benefits which arise from the single Vice of Drunkenness, fo much run down and declaimed against by all grave Reformers. With as much Judgment your half-witted Folk are accustomed to censure Gaming. And indeed (fuch is the Ignorance and Folly of Mankind) a Gamester and a Drunkard are thought no better than public Nusances, when in truth they do each in their Way greatly conduce to the public Benefit. If you look only on the Surface and first Appearance of Things, you will no doubt think playing at Cards a very idle and fruitless Occupation. dive deeper, and you shall perceive this idle Amusement employs the Card-maker, and he fets the Paper-mills at work, by which the poor Rag-man is supported; not to mention the Builders and Workers in Wood and Iron, that are employed in erecting and furnishing those Mills. Look F 4 ftill

DIAL. Still deeper, and you shall find that Candles and Chair-hire employ the industrious and the poor, who, by these Means, come to be relieved by Sharpers and Gentlemen, who would not give one Penny in Chari-But' you will fay that many Gentlemen and Ladies are ruined by Play, without confidering, that what one Man loses another gets, and that confequently as many are made as ruined: Money changeth Hands, and in this Circulation the Life of Bufiness and Commerce consists. When Money is spent, it is all one to the Public who spends it. Suppose a Fool of Quality becomes the Dupe of a Man of mean Birth and Circumstance, who has more Wit. In this Case, what Harm doth the Public fustain? Poverty is relieved, Ingenuity is rewarded, the Money stays at home, and has a lively Circulation, the ingenious Sharper being enabled to fet up an Equipage and fpend handsomely, which cannot be done without employing a world of People. But you will perhaps object, that a Man reduced by Play may be put upon desperate Courses hurtful to the Public. Suppose the worst, and that he turns Highwayman, fuch Men have a short Life and a merry. While he lives, he spends, and for one that he robs makes Twenty the bet-

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ter for his Expence. And when his DIAL. time is come, a poor Family may be relieved by fifty or a hundred Pounds fet upon his Head. A vulgar Eye looks on many a Man as an idle or mischievous Fellow, whom a true Philosopher viewing in another Light, confiders as a Man of pleasant Occupation who diverts himself, and benefits the Public: And that with fo much Ease, that he employs a multitude of Men, and fets an infinite Machine in Motion, without knowing the good he does, or even intending to do any; which is peculiar to that Gentleman-like way of doing good by Vice. I was confidering Play, and that infenfibly led me to the Advantages, which attend robbing on the highway. Oh the beautiful and never enough admired Connexion of Vices! It would take too much Time to flew how they all hang together, and what an infinite deal of good takes its rife from every one of them. word for a favourite Vice, and I shall leave you to make out the rest your self, by applying the fame way of reasoning to all other Vices. A poor Girl, who might not have the spending of half a Crown a Week in what you call an honest way, no sooner hath the good Fortune to be a kept Mistress, but she employs Milliners, LaunDIAL. Laundresses, Tire-women, Mercers, and a Number of other Trades to the Benefit of her Country. It wou'd be endless to trace and pursue every particular Vice through its Consequences and Effects, and shew the vast Advantage they all are of to the Public. The true Springs that actuate the great Machine of Commerce, and make a flourishing State have been hitherto little understood. Your Moralists and Divines have for fo many ages been corrupting the genuine Sense of Mankind, and filling their Heads with fuch abfurd Principles, that it is in the power of few Men to contemplate real Life with an unprejudiced Eye. And fewer still have fufficient Parts and Sagacity to pursue a long Train of Consequences, Relations, and Dependences; which must be done in order to form a just and intire Notion of the public Weal. But, as I said before, our Sect hath produced Men capable of these Discoveries, who have displayed them in a full Light, and made them public for the Benefit of their Country.

III. Oh! Said Euphranor, who heard this Discourse with great Attention, you Lysicles are the very Man I wanted, eloquent and ingenious, knowing in the Principles of your Sect, and willing to impart

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impart them. Pray tell me, do these DIAL. Principles find an easy Admission in the World? LYS. They do among ingenious Men and People of Fashion, though you will fometimes meet with strong Prejudices against them in the middle fort, an Effect of ordinary Talents and mean Breeding. EUPH. I shou'd wonder if Men were not shocked at Notions of such a furprifing Nature, fo contrary to all Laws, Education, and Religion. They wou'd be shocked much more if it had not been for the skilful Address of our Philosophers; who, confidering that most Men are influenced by Names rather than Things, have introduced a certain polite way of Speaking, which leffens much of the Abhorrence and Prejudice towards Vice. EUPH. Explain me this. LYS. Thus in our Dialect a vicious Man is a Man of Pleasure: A Sharper is one that plays the whole Game: A Lady is faid to have an Affair: A Gentleman to be Gallant: A Rogue in Business to be one that knows the World, By this means we have no fuch things as Sots, Debauchees, Whores, Rogues, or the like in the beau monde, who may enjoy their Vices without incurring disagreeable Appellations. EUPH. Vice then is, it feems, a fine Thing with an ugly Name. LYS. Be affured

DIAL, affured it is. EUPH. It should seem then. that Plato's fearing lest Youth might be corrupted, by those Fables which reprefented the Gods vicious, was an Effect of his Weakness and Ignorance. LYS. It was, take my Word for it. EUPH. And yet Plato had kept good Company and lived in a Court. And Cicero, who knew the World well, had a profound Esteem for him. CRI. I tell you, Euphranor, that Plato and Tully might perhaps make a Figure in Athens or Rome: But were they to revive in our Days, they wou'd pass but for underbred Pedants, there being at most Coffee-houses in London, several able Men who could convince them they knew nothing in, what they are valued for much for, Morals and Politics. How many long-headed Men do I know both in the Court-end and the City with five times Plato's Sense, who care not one straw what Notion their Sons have of God or Vertue.

IV. CRI. I can illustrate this Doctrine of Lysicles by Examples that will make you perceive its Force. Cleophon, a Minute Philosopher, took strict Care of his Son's Education and entered him betimes in the Principles of his Sect. Callicles (that was his Son's Name) being a Youth of

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of Parts made a notable Progress; inso-DIAL. much that before he became of Age he killed his old covetous Father with Vexation, and foon after ruined the Estate he left behind him; or, in other Words, made a Present of it to the Public, spreading the Dunghill collected by his Anceftors over the Face of the Nation, and making out of one overgrown Estate, several pretty Fortunes for ingenious Men, who live by the Vices of the Great. Telefilla, though a Woman of Quality and Spirit, made no Figure in the World, till she was instructed by her Husband in the Tenets of the Minute Philosophy, which he wifely thought would prevent her giving any Thing in Charity. From that Time she took a Turn towards expensive Diversions, particularly deep Play: By which Means the foon transferred a confiderable Share of his Fortune, to feveral acute Men skilled in that Mystery, who wanted it more, and circulate it quicker than her Husband would have done, who in Return hath got an Heir to his Estate, having never had a Child before. That same Telefilla, who was good for nothing as long as she believed her Catechism, now shines in all public Places, is a Lady of Gallantry and Fashion, and has by her extravagant Parade

DIAL rade in Lace, and fine Clothes, raised a Spirit of Expence in other Ladies, very much to the public Benefit, tho', it must be owned, to the Mortification of many frugal Husbands. While Crito related these Facts with a grave Face, I could not forbear smiling; which Lysicles observing, superficial Minds, said he, may perhaps find fomething to ridicule in these Accounts: But all who are Masters of a just Way of thinking, must needs see that those Maxims, the Benefit whereof is universal, and the Damage only particular to private Persons or Families, ought to be encouraged in a wife Commonwealth. For my part, faid Euphranor, I confess my self to be rather dazzled and confounded than convinced by your Reasoning, which, as you observed your self, taking in the Connexion of many diftant Points, requires great Extent of Thought to comprehend it. I must therefore intreat you to bear with my Defects, fuffer me to take to pieces what is too big to be received at once: And where I cannot keep Pace with you, permit me to follow you Step by Step, as fast as I can. LYS. There is Reason in what you say. Every one cannot fuddenly take a long Concatenation of Arguments.

V. EUPH.

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V. EUPH. Your several Arguments DIAL. feem to centre in this, that Vice circulates Money, and promotes Industry, which causeth a People to flourish. Is it not so? LYS. It is. EUPH. And the Reason that Vice produceth this Effect, is, because it caufeth an extravagant Confumption which is the most beneficial to the Manufacturers, their Encouragement confisting in a quick demand and high price. LYS. True. EUPH. Hence you think a Drunkard most beneficial to the Brewer and the Vintner, as caufing a quick Confumption of Liquor, inafmuch as he drinks more than other Men. LYS. Without doubt. EUPH. Say, Lyficles, who drinks most, a fick Man or a healthy? LYS. A healthy. EUPH. And which is healthieft, a fober Man or a Drunkard? LYS. A fober Man. EUPH. A fober Man therefore in Health may drink more than a Drunkard when he is fick. LYS. He may. EUPH. What think you, will a Man confume more Meat and Drink in a long Life or a short one? LYS. In a long. EUPH. A lober healthy Man, therefore, in a long Life may circulate more Money by eating and drinking, than a Glutton or Drunkard in a short one. LYS. What then? EUPH. Why then, it should seem, that he may be more beneficial to the Public, even

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DIAL. even in this way of eating and drinking. LYS. I shall never own that Temperance is the Way to promote drinking. EUPH. But you will own that Sickness lessens, and Death puts an End to all drinking. fame Argument will hold, for ought I can fee, with respect to all other Vices that impair Mens Health, and shorten their Lives. And if we admit this, it will not be so clear a Point, that Vice hath Merit towards the Public. LYS. But admitting that some Artificers or Traders might be as well encouraged by the fober Men as the vicious; what shall we say of those, who fubfist altogether by Vice and Vanity? EUPH. If fuch there are, may they not be otherwise employed without Loss to Tell me, Lysicles, is there the Public? any Thing in the Nature of Vice, as fuch that renders it a public Bleffing, or is it only the Confumption it occasions? LYS. I have already shewn how it benefits the Nation by the Confumption of its Manu-EUPH. And you have grantfactures. ed that a long and healthy Life confumes more than a short and fickly one; and you will not deny that many confume more than one. Upon the whole then, compute and fay, which is most likely to promote the Industry of his Countrymen, a virtuous married Man with a healthy

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healthy numerous Offspring, and who DIAL. feeds and clothes the Orphans in his Neighbourhood, or a fashionable Rake about Town. I would fain know whether Money spent innocently, doth not circulate as well as that spent upon Vice. And if so, whether by your own Rule it doth not benefit the Public as much? LYS. What I have proved, I proved plainly, and there is no need of more Words about EUPH. You feem to me, to have proved nothing, unless you can make it out that it is impossible to spend a Fortune innocently. I should think the public Weal of a Nation confifts in the Number and good Condition of its Inhabitants; Have you any thing to object to this? LYS. I think not. EUPH. To this end which would most conduce, the employing Men in open Air, and manly Exercise, or in fedentary Business within Doors? LYS. The former, I suppose. EUPH. Should it not feem therefore, that Building, Gardening, and Agriculture, would employ Men more usefully to the Public, than if Tailors, Barbers, Perfumers, Distillers, and fuch Arts were multiplied. LYS. All this I grant; but it makes against you. what moves Men to build and plant but Vanity, and what is Vanity but Vice? EUPH. But if a Man should do those VOL. I. G things

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DIAL things for his Convenience or Pleasure. and in proportion to his Fortune, without a foolish Ostentation, or over-rating them beyond their due Value, they would not then be the Effect of Vice; and how do you know but this may be the Case? One thing I know, That the readiest way to quicken that fort of Industry, and employ Carpenters, Masons, Smiths, and all fuch Trades, would be to put in practice the happy Hint of a celebrated Minute Philosopher; who by profound Thinking has discovered, That burning the City of London would be no fuch bad Action, as filly prejudiced People might possibly imagine; inafmuch as it would produce a quick Circulation of Property, transferring it from the Rich to the Poor, and employing a great Number of Artificers of all kinds. This at least cannot be denied, that it hath opened a new way of Thinking to our Incendiaries, of which the Public hath of late begun to reap the Benefit. EUPH. I cannot fufficiently admire this ingenious Thought.

VI. But methinks it would be dangerous to make such Notions publick. CRI. Dangerous! to whom? EUPH. In the first place, to the Publisher. CRI. That is a Mistake; for such Notions have been published

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published and met with due Applause, in DIAL. this most wise and happy Age of Freethinking, Free-speaking, Free-writing, and Free-acting. EUPH. How! may a Man then publish and practise such things with Impunity? CRI. To speak the Truth, I am not so clear as to the practic Part. unlucky Accident now and then befals an ingenious Man. The Minute Philosopher Magirus, being defirous to benefit the Public, by circulating an Estate possessed by a near Relation, who had not the heart to fpend it, foon convinced himself, upon these Principles, that it would be a very worthy Action to dispatch out of the way fuch a useless Fellow, to whom he was next Heir. But for this laudable Attempt, he had the Misfortune to be hanged by an under-bred Judge and Jury. Could any thing be more unjust? EUPH. Why unjust? CRI. Is it not unjust to punish Actions, when the Principles from which they directly follow are tolerated and applauded by the Public? Can any thing be more inconfistent, than to condemn in Practice what is approved in Speculation? Truth is one and the fame; it being impossible a thing should be practically wrong, and speculatively right. Thus much is certain, Magirus was perfect Master of all this Theory, and argued most G 2

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That been shed DIAL, most acutely about it with a Friend of mine, a little before he did the Fact for which he died. LYS. The best on't is, the World every Day grows wifer; though it must be owned, the Writers of our Sect have not yet shaken off all Respect for Humane Laws, whatever they may do as to Divine. It feems they venture no further, than to recommend an inward Principle of Vice, operating under an outward Restraint CRI. That Writer of Humane Laws. who confiders Man only as an Instrument of Passion, who absolves him from all Ties of Conscience and Religion, and leaves him no Law to respect or to fear, but the Law of the Land, is to be fure a Public Benefit. You mistake, Euphranor, if you think the Minute Philosophers idle Theorists: They are Men of practical Views. EUPH. As much as I love Liberty, I should be afraid to live among such People: it would be, as Seneca fomewhere expresseth it, in libertate bellis ac tyrannis sæviore, LYS. What do you mean by quoting Plato and Seneca? Can you imagine a Freethinker is to be influenced by the Authority of fuch old-fashioned Writers? EUPH. You, Lysicles, and your Friend have often quoted to me ingenious Moderns, profound fine Gentlemen, with new Names of Authors in the Minute Philosophy, phy ger tho ma

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phy, to whose Merits I am a perfect Stran-DIAL. ger. Suffer me in my turn to cite such Au-II. thorities as I know, and have passed for many Ages upon the World.

VII. But, Authority apart, what do you fay to Experience? My Observation can reach as far as a private Family: and some wife Men have thought, a Family may be confidered as a fmall Kingdom, or a Kingdom as a great Family. Do you admit this to be true? LYS. If I fay, Yes, you'll make an Inference; and if I say, No, you'll demand a Reason. The best way is to say nothing at all. There is, I fee, no end of answering. EUPH. If you give up the Point you undertook to prove, there is an end at once: But if you hope to convince me, you must answer my Questions, and allow me the Liberty to argue and infer. LYS. Well, suppose I admit that a Kingdom may be confidered as a great Family. EUPH. I shall ask you then, whether ever you knew private Families thrive by those Vices you think fo beneficial to the Public? LYS. Suppose I have not. EUPH. Might not a Man therefore by a Parity of Reason, suspect their being of that Benefit to the Public? LYS. Fear not; the next Age will thrive and flourish. EUPH. Pray tell me, Lysicles: Suppose you saw a Fruit ot

II.

DIAL. of a new untried Kind: would you recommend it to your own Family to make a full Meal of? LYS. I would not. EUPH. Why then would you try upon your own Country these Maxims which were never admitted in any other? LYS. The Experiment must begin somewhere; and we are refolved our own Country shall have the Honour and Advantage of it. EUPH. O Lyficles! hath not Old England subfisted for many Ages without the help of your Notions? LYS. She has. EUPH. And made some Figure? LYS. I grant it. EUPH. Why then should you make her run the Rifque of a new Experiment, when it is certain she may do without it? LYS. But we would make her do better. We would produce a Change in her that never was feen in any Nation. EUPH. Sallust observes, that a little before the Downfall of the Roman Greatness, Avarice (the Effect of Luxury) had erased the good old Principles of Probity and Justice, had produced a Contempt for Religion, and made every thing venal: while Ambition bred Diffimulation, and caused Men to unite in Clubs and Parties, not from honourable Motives, but narrow and interested Views. The same Historian obferves of that great Free-thinker Catiline, that he made it his business to infinuate himself

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himself into the Acquaintance of young DIAL. Men, whose Minds unimproved by Years and Experience, were more eafily feduced. I know not how it happens, but these Pasfages have occurred to my Thoughts more than once during this Conversation. LYS. Sallust was a sententious Pedant. EUPH. But confult any Historian; look into any Writer. See, for Instance, what Xenophon and Livy fay of Sparta and Rome, and then tell me, if Vice be not the likeliest way to ruin and enflave a People. LYS. When a Point is clear by its own Evidence, I never think it worth while to confult old Authors about it. CRI. It requires much Thought and delicate Observation, to go to the bottom of things. But one who hath come at Truth with Difficulty, can impart it with Ease. I will therefore, Euphranor, explain to you in three Words (what none of your old Writers ever dreamt of) the true Cause of Ruin to those States. must know that Vice and Virtue, being opposite and contradictory Principles, both working at once in a State, will produce contrary Effects, which intestine Discord must needs tend to the Dissolution and Ruin of the whole. But it is the Design of our Minute Philosophers, by making Men wicked upon Principle, a thing unknown to the Ancients, so to weaken and destroy the G 4

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VIII.

DIAL. the force of Virtue, that its Effects shall not be felt in the Public. In which case Vice being uncontrolled, without Let or Impediment of Principle; pure and genuine, without Allay of Virtue, the Nation must doubtless be very flourishing and trium-EUPH. Truly, a noble Scheme! CRI. And in a fair way to take effect. For our young Proficients in the Minute Philosophy, having, by a rare Felicity of Education, no Tincture of Bigotry or Prejudice, do far outgo the old Standers and Professors of the Sect; who, though Men of admirable Parts, yet, having had the Misfortune to be imbued in their Childhood with fome religious Notions. could never after get intirely rid of them; but still retain some small Grains of Conscience and Superstition, which are a Check upon the noblest Genius. In proof of this, I remember that the famous Minute Philosopher, old Demodicus, came one Day from Conversation upon Business with Timander, a young Gentleman of the fame Sect, full of Astonishment. I am furprised, said he, to see so young, and withal fo compleat a Villain, and, fuch was the force of Prejudice, spoke of Timander with Abhorrence, not confidering that he was only the more egregious and profound Philosopher of the two.

VIII. EUPH. Though much may be DIAL. hoped from the unprejudiced Education of young Gentlemen, yet it feems we are not to expect a fettled and intire Happiness, before Vice reigns pure and unmixed: Till then, much is to be feared from the dangerous Struggle between Vice and Virtue, which may perchance overturn and dissolve this Government, as it hath done others. LYS. Mo matter for that, if a better comes in its Place. We have cleared the Land of all Prejudices towards Government or Constitution, and made them fly like other Phantasms before the Light of Reason and good Sense. Men who think deeply cannot fee any Reafon, why Power should not change Hands as well as Property: Or, why the Fashion of a Government should not be changed as easily as that of a Garment. The perpetual circulatingand revolving of Wealth and Power, no matter through what or whose Hands, is that which keeps up Life and Spirit in a Those who are even slightly read in our Philosophy, know that of all Prejudices the filliest is an Attachment to Forms. CRI. To fay no more upon fo clear a Point, the overturning a Government may be justified upon the same Principles as the burning a Town, would produce parallel Effects, and equally contribute to the

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DIAL, to the public Good. In both Cases, the natural Springs of Action are forcibly exerted: And in this general Industry what one loses another gets, a quick Circulation of Wealth and Power making the Sum Total to flourish. EUPH. And do the Minute Philosophers publish these Things to the World? LYS. It must be confessed our Writers proceed in Politicks with greater Caution than they think necessary with regard to Religion. CRI. But those things plainly follow from their Principles, and are to be admitted for the genuine Doctrine of the Sect, expressed perhaps with more Freedom and Perspicuity, than might be thought prudent by those who would manage the Public, or not offend weak Brethren. EUPH. And pray, is there not need of Caution, a Rebel, or Incendiary being Characters that many Men have a Prejudice against? LYS. Weak People of all Ranks have a world of abfurd Prejudices. EUPH. But the better Sort, fuch as Statesmen and Legislators; do you think they have not the same Indisposition towards admitting your Principles? LYS. Perhaps they may; but the Reason is plain. CRI. This puts me in mind of that ingenious Philosopher, the Gamester Glaucus, who used to say, that Statesmen and Lawgivers may keep a Stir about right and and we truth, paffed and V fidere equal could think ing to ties? and I er do his Train

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and wrong, just and unjust, but that, in DIAL. truth, Property of every Kind had so often paffed from the right Owners by Fraud and Violence, that it was now to be confidered as lying on the common, and with equal Right belonged to every one that could feize it. EUPH. What are we to think then of Laws and Regulations relating to Right and Wrong, Crimes and Duties? LYS. They ferve to bind weak Minds. and keep the Vulgar in awe: But no fooner doth a true Genius arise, but he breaks his Way to Greatness, through all the Trammels of Duty, Conscience, Religion, Law; to all which he sheweth himself infinitely fuperior.

IX. EUPH. You are, it seems, for bringing about a thorough Reformation. LYS. As to what is commonly called the Reformation, I cou'd never see how, or wherein the World was the better for it. It is much the same as Popery, with this Difference, that it is the more prude-like and disagreeable Thing of the two. A noted Writer of ours makes it too great a Compliment, when he computes the Benefit of Hooped-petticoats to be nearly equal to that of the Reformation. Thorough Reformation is thorough Liberty. Leave Nature at full Freedom to work her own

DIAL. own Way, and all will be well. This is what we aim at, and nothing short of this can come up to our Principles. Crito, who is a zealous Protestant, hearing these Words, could not refrain. The worst Effect of the Reformation, faid he, was the rescuing wicked Men from a Darkness which kept them in awe. This, as it hath proved, was holding out Light to Robbers and Murderers. Light in it felf is good, and the same Light which shews a Man the Folly of Superstition, might shew him the Truth of Religion, and the Madness of Atheism. But to make use of Light, only to fee the Evils on one Side, and never to fee, but to run blindly upon the worse Extreme; this is to make the best of Things produce Evil, in the same Sense that you prove the worst of Things to produce Good, to wit, accidentally or indirectly: And by the same Method of arguing, you may prove that even Difeases are useful: But whatever Benefit feems to accrue to the Public, either from Difease of Mind or Body, is not their genuine Offspring, and may be obtained without them. Lyficles was a little disconcerted by the affirmative Air of Crito; but after a short Pause replied briskly, That to contemplate the public Good was not every one's Talent. True, said Euphranor, I question

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question whether every one can frame a DIAL. Notion of the public Good, much less II. judge of the Means to promote it.

X. But you, Lyficles, who are master of this Subject, will be pleased to inform me, whether the public Good of a Nation doth not imply the particular Good of its Individuals? LYS. It doth. EUPH. And doth not the Good or Happiness of a Man confift, in having both Soul and Body found and in good Condition, enjoying those Things which their respective Natures require, and free from those Things which are odious or hurtful to them. LYS. I do not deny all this to be true. EUPH. Now it would feem worth while to consider, whether the regular decent Life of a virtuous Man may not as much conduce to this End, as the mad Sallies of Intemperance and Debauchery. will acknowledge that a Nation may meerly subsist, or be kept alive, but it is impossible it would flourish without the Aid of Vice. To produce a quick Circulation of Traffick and Wealth in a State, there must be exorbitant and irregular Motions in the Appetites and Paffions. EUPH. The more People a Nation contains, and the happier those People are, the more that Nation may be said to flourish. I think

DIAL, think we are agreed in this Point. LYS. We are. EUPH. You allow then that Riches are not an ultimate End, but

should only be considered as the Means to procure Happiness. LYS. I do. EUPH. It feems, that Means cannot be of Use without our knowing the End, and how to apply them to it. LYS. It feems fo. EUPH. Will it not follow, that in order to make a Nation flourish, it is not sufficient to make it wealthy, without knowing the true End and Happiness of Mankind, and how to apply Wealth towards attaining that End? In Proportion as these Points are known and practised, I think the Nation should be likely to flourish. But for a People, who neither know nor practife them, to gain Riches, feems to me the same Advantage that it would be for a fick Man to come at Plenty of Meat and Drink, which he could not use but to his Hurt. LYS. This is meer Sophistry: It is arguing without persuading. Look into common Life: Examine the Pursuits of Men: Have a due Respect for the Consent of the World; and you will foon be convinced, that Riches alone are sufficient to make a Nation flourishing and happy. Give them Riches and they will make themselves happy, without that political Invention, that Trick of S Virt

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of Statesmen and Philosophers, called DIAL. Virtue.

XI. EUPH. Virtue then, in your Account, is a Trick of Statesmen. LYS. It is. EUPH. Why then do your fagacious Sect betray and divulge that Trick or Secret of State, which wife Men have judged necessary for the good Government of the World? Lyficles hefitating, Crito made answer, That he presumed it was because their Sect, being wifer than all other wife Men, disdained to see the World governed by wrong Maxims, and would fet all Things on a right Bottom. EUPH. Thus much is certain: If we look into all Institutions of Government, and the political Writings of fuch as have heretofore passed for wise Men, we shall find a great Regard for Virtue. LYS. You shall find a strong Tincture of Prejudice. But, as I faid before, confult the Multitude if you would find Nature and Truth. EUPH. But among Country Gentlemen, and Farmers, and the better Sort of Tradesmen, is not Virtue a reputable Thing? LYS. You pick up Authorities among Men of low Life and vile Education. EUPH. Perhaps we ought to pay a decent Respect to the Authority of Minute Philosophers. LYS. And I would fain DIAL fain know whose Authority should be more confidered, than that of those Gentlemen who are alone above Prejudice, and think for themselves. EUPH. How doth it appear that you are the only unprejudiced Part of Mankind? May not a Minute Philosopher, as well as another Man, be prejudiced in Favour of the Leaders of his Sect? May not an Atheistical Education prejudice towards Atheism? What should hinder a Man's being prejudiced against Religion, as well as for it? Or can you affign any Reason why an Attachment to Pleasure, Interest, Vice, or Vanity, may not be supposed to prejudice Men against Virtue? LYS. This is pleafant. What! Suppose those very Men influenced by Prejudice, who are always disputing against it, whose constant Aim it is to detect and demolish Prejudices of all Kinds! Except their own, replied Crito, for you must pardon me, if I cannot help thinking they have some small Prejudice, though not in Favour of Virtue.

XII. I observe, Lysicles, that you allowed to Euphranor, the greater Number of happy People are in a State, the more that State may be said to flourish: It follows therefore, That such Methods as mul-

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multiply Inhabitants are good, and fuch DIAL. as diminish them are bad for the Public. And one would think no Body need be told, that the Strength of a State confifts more in the Number and Sort of People, than in any Thing else. But in Proportion as Vice and Luxury, those public Bleffings encouraged by this Minute Philosophy, prevail among us, fewer are disposed to marry, too many being diverted by Pleafure, disabled by Disease, or frightned by Expence. Nor doth Vice only thin a Nation, but also debaseth it by a puny degenerate Race. I might add, That it is ruinous to our Manufactures; both as it makes Labour dear, and thereby enables our more frugal Neighbours to underfell us: and alfo as it diverts the lower fort of People from honest Callings to wicked Projects. If these and such Considerations were taken into the Account, I believe it would be evident to any Man in his Senses, that the imaginary Benefits of Vice bear no Proportion to the folid real Woes that attend it. Lysicles, upon this, shook his Head, and smiled at Crito, without vouchfafing any other Answer. After which, addressing himself to Euphranor, There cannot, faid he, be a stronger Instance of Prejudice, than that a Man should at this time of Day preserve a Reverence for that Vol. I.

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as ulDIAL. Idol, Virtue, a thing so effectually exposed and exploded by the most knowing Men of the Age, who have shewn, that Man is a meer Engine, play'd upon and driven about by fenfible Objects: and that moral Virtue is only a Name, a Notion, a Chimæra, an Enthusiasm, or at best a Fashion, uncertain and changeable, like all EUPH. What do you other Fashions. think, Lyficles, of Health? Doth it depend on Fancy and Caprice, or is it fomething real in the bodily Composition of a Man? LYS. Health is fomething real, which refults from the right Constitution and Temperature of the Organs, and the Fluids circulating through them. EUPH. This you fay is Health of Body. LYS. It is. EUPH. And may we not suppose an healthy Constitution of Soul, when the Notions are right, the Judgments true, the Will regular, the Paffions and Appetites directed to their proper Objects, and confined within due Bounds? This, in regard to the Soul, feems what Health is to the Body. And the Man whose Mind is so constituted, is he not properly cal-And to produce this led virtuous? healthy Disposition in the Minds of his Countrymen, should not every good Man employ his Endeavours? If these things have any appearance of Truth, as to me they

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they feem to have, it will not then be DIAL. fo clear a Point, that Virtue is a meer II. Whim or Fashion, as you are pleased to represent it: I must own something unexpectedly, after what had been discoursed in last Evening's Conference, which if you would call to mind, it might perhaps save both of us some Trouble. LYS. Would you know the Truth, Euphranor? I must own I have quite forgot all your Discourse about Virtue, Duty, and all such Points, which, being of an airy notional nature, are apt to vanish, and leave no Trace on a Mind accustomed only to receive Impression from Realities.

XIII. Having heard these Words, Euphranor looked at Crito and me, and faid fmiling, I have mistaken my Part: it was mine to learn, and his to instruct. Then addressing himself to Lysicles, Deal faithfully, faid he, and let me know whether the publick Benefit of Vice be in truth that which makes you plead for it? LYS. I love to speak frankly what I Know then, that Private Interest is the first and principal Consideration with Philosophers of our Sect. of-all Interests, Pleasure is that which hath the strongest Charms, and no Pleafures like those which are heightened and H 2 enII.

DIAL enlivened by Licence. Herein confifts the peculiar Excellency of our Principles, that they shew People how to serve their Country by diverting themselves, causing the two Streams of public Spirit and Selflove to unite and run in the fame Channel. I have told you already, that I admit a Nation might fubfift by the Rules of Virtue. But give me leave to fay, it will barely subsist in a dull, joyles, infipid State; whereas the sprightly Excesses of Vice inspire Men with Joy. And where Particulars rejoice, the Public, which is made up of Particulars, do fo too: that is, the Public must be This I take to be an irrefragable Argument. But to give you its full Force, and make it as plain as possible, I will trace things from their Original. Happiness is the End to which created Beings naturally tend, but we find that all Animals, whether Men or Brutes, do naturally and principally purfue real Plafure of Sense; which is therefore to be thought their supreme Good, their true End and Happiness. It is for this Men live; and whoever understands Life mul allow that Man to enjoy the Top and Flower of it, who hath a quick Sense Pleasure, and withal Spirit, Skill, and Fortune, fufficient to gratify every Appe

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tite, and every Taste. Niggards and Fools DIAL. will envy or traduce fuch a one, because they cannot equal him. Hence, all that fober Trifling, in Disparagement of what every one would be mafter of if he could, a full Freedom and unlimited Scope of Pleasure. EUPH. Let me fee whether I understand you. Pleasure of Sense, you fay, is the chief Pleasure. LYS. I do. EUPH. And this would be crampt and diminished by Virtue. LYS. It would. EUPH. Tell me, Lyficles, is Pleafure then at the height when the Appetites are fatisfied? LYS. There is then only an Indolence, the lively Sense of Pleasure being past. EUPH. It should seem therefore, that the Appetites must be always craving to preserve Pleafure alive. LYS. That is our Sense of the Matter. EUPH. The Greek Philosopher therefore was in the right, who created confidered the Body of a Man of Pleasure as a leaky Vessel, always filling, and netes, do ver full. LYS. You may divert your self with Allegories, if you please. But all the while ours is literally the true ir true Taste of Nature. Look throughout the is Men Universe, and you shall find Birds and fe mult Fishes, Beasts and Insects, all kinds of op and Animals with which the Creation swarms, Sense of constantly engaged by Instinct in the Pur-H 3

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DIAL. suit of sensible Pleasure. And shall Man alone be the grave Fool who thwarts, and croffes, and fubdues his Appetites, while his Fellow-creatures do all most joyfully and freely indulge them? EUPH. How! Lyficles! I thought that being governed by the Senses, Appetites, and Passions, was the most grievous Slavery: and that the proper Business of Free-thinkers, or Philosophers, had been to set Men free from the Power of Ambition, Avarice, LYS. You mistake and Senfuality. We make Men relish the the Point. World, attentive to their Interests, lively and luxurious in their Pleasures, without Fear or Restraint either from We despise those preach-God or Man. ing Writers, who used to disturb or cramp the Pleasures and Amusements of Humane Life. We hold, that a wife Man who meddles with Business, doth it altogether for his Interest, and refers his Interest to his Pleasure. With us it is a Maxim, That a Man should seize the Moments as they fly. Without Love, and Wine, and Play, and late Hours, we hold Life not to be worth living. I grant, indeed, that there is fomething groß and ill-bred in the Vices of mean Men, which the genteel Philosopher abhors. CRI. But to cheat, whore, betray, get drunk, do all

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these things decently, this is true Wis-DIAL. dom and Elegance of Taste. II.

croffes, and subdues as Appenies extent XIV. EUPH. To me, who have been us'd to another way of thinking, this new Philosophy seems difficult to digest. I must therefore beg leave to examine its Principles, with the fame Freedom that you do those of other Sects. LYS. Agreed. EUPH. You say, if I mistake not, that a wife Man pursues only his private Interest, and that this confists in sensual Pleasure, for proof whereof you appeal to Nature. Is not this what you advance? LYS. It is. EUPH. You conclude therefore, that as other Animals are guided by natural Instinct, Man too ought to follow the Dictates of Sense and Appetite. LYS. I do. EUPH. But in this, you do not argue as if Man had only Sense and Appetite for his Guides, on which Supposition there might be Truth in what you fay? But what if he hath Intellect, Reason, a higher Destinct, and a nobler Life? If this be the Case, and you being Man, live like a Brute, is it not the Way to be defrauded of your true Happiness? to be mortified and disappointed? Confider most forts of Brutes: you shall perhaps find them have a greater Share of sensual Happiness than Man. LYS.

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DIAL. LYS. To our Sorrow we do. This hath made feveral Gentlemen of our Sect envy Brutes, and lament the Lot of Humane Kind. CRI. It was a Confideration of this fort, which inspired Erotylus with the laudable Ambition of wishing himself a Snail, upon hearing of certain Particularities discovered in that Animal by a modern Virtuoso. EUPH. Tell me, Lysicles, if you had an inexhaustible Fund of Gold and Silver, should you envy another for having a little more Copper than you? LYS. I should not. EUPH. Are not Reafon, Imagination, and Sense, Faculties differing in Kind, and in Rank higher one than another. LYS. I do not deny it. EUPH. Their Acts therefore differ in Kind. LYS. They do. EUPH. Confequently the Pleasures perfective of those Acts are also different. LYS. They are. EUPH. You admit therefore three forts of Pleasure: Pleasure of Reason, Pleasure of Imagination, and Pleasure of Sense. LYS. I do: EUPH. And, as it is reasonable to think, the Operation of the highest and noblest Faculty to be attended with the highest Pleasure, may we not suppose the two former to be as Gold or Silver, and the latter only as Copper? Whence it should seem to follow, that Man need not envy or imitate a Brute. LYS. And nevertheles

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vertheless there are very ingenious Men DIAL. who do. And furely every one may be allowed to know what he wants, and wherein his true Happiness consists. EUPH. Is it not plain that different Animals have different Pleasures? Take a Hog from his Ditch or Dunghil, lay him on a rich Bed, treat him with Sweetmeats, and Music, and Perfumes, these things will be no Entertainment to him. Do not a Bird, a Beast, a Fish, amuse themselves in various manners, infomuch that what is pleafing to one may be Death to another? Is it ever feen that one of these Animals quits its own Element or Way of living, to adopt that of another? And shall Man quit his own Nature to imitate a Brute? LYS. But Sense is not only natural to Brutes: is it not also natural to Man? EUPH. It is, but with this Difference: it maketh the Whole of a Brute, but is the lowest Part or Faculty of a Humane Soul. The Nature of any Thing is peculiarly that which doth diffinguish it from other Things, not what it hath in common with them. Do you allow this to be true? LYS. I do. EUPH. And is not Reason that which makes the principal Difference between Man and other Animals? LYS. It is. EUPH. Reason therefore being the principal

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DIAL. cipal part of our Nature, whatever is most reasonable should feem most natural to Man. Must we not therefore think rational Pleasures more agreeable to Humane Kind, than those of Sense? Man and Beast having different Natures, seem to have different Faculties, different Enjoyments, and different forts of Happiness. You can eafily conceive, that the fort of Life which makes the Happiness of a Mole or a Bat, would be a very wretched one for an Eagle. And may you not as well conceive that the Happiness of a Brute can never constitute the true Happiness of a Man? A Beaft, without Reflexion or Remorfe, without Forefight or Appetite of Immortality, without Notion of Vice or Virtue, or Order, or Reason, or Knowledge! What Motives, what Grounds can there be for bringing down Man, in whom are all these things, to a Level with fuch a Creature? What Merit, what Ambition in the Minute Philosopher to make fuch an Animal a Guide or Rule for Humane Life?

XV. LYS. It is strange, Euphranor, that one who admits Freedom of Thought as you do, should yet be such a Slave to Prejudice. You still talk of Order and Virtue, as of real things, as if our Philosophers

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losophers had never demonstrated, that DIAL. they have no Foundation in Nature, and are only the Effects of Education. I know, faid Crito, how the Minute Philosophers are accustomed to demonstrate this Point. They confider the animal Nature of Man. or Man fo far forth as he is Animal : and it must be owned that considered in that Light, he hath no Sense of Duty, no Notion of Virtue. He therefore, who should look for Virtue among meer Animals, or Humane Kind as fuch, would look in the wrong place. But that Philosopher, who is attentive only to the Animal Part of his Being, and raiseth his Theories from the very dregs of our Species, may probably upon fecond Thoughts find himfelf mif-Crito, faid Lyficles, Look you taken. my Argument is with Euphranor, to whom addreffing his Discourse; I observe, said he, that you stand much upon the Dignity of Humane Nature. This Thing of Dignity is an old worn-out Notion, which depends on other Notions, old and stale, and worn-out, fuch as an immaterial Spirit, and a Ray derived from the Divinity. But in these Days Men of Sense make a Jest of all this Grandeur and Dignity: and many there are would gladly exchange their Share of it for the Repose and Freedom, and Senfuality of a Brute. But Comparisons

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DIAL parisons are odious: waving therefore all II. Inquiry concerning the respective Excellencies of Man and Beaft, and whether it is beneath a Man to follow or imitate Brute Animals, in judging of the chief Good and Conduct of Life and Manners, I shall be content to appeal to the Authority of Men themselves, for the Truth of my Notions. Do but look abroad into the World, and ask the common run of Men, whether Pleasure of Sense be not the only true, folid, substantial Good of their Kind? EUPH. But might not the same vulgar fort of Men prefer a Piece of Signpost Painting to one of Raphael's, or a Grubstreet Ballad to an Ode of Horace? Is there not a real Difference between good and bad Writing? LYS. There is. EUPH. And yet you will allow there must be a Maturity and Improvement of Understanding to discern this Difference, which doth not make it therefore less real. LYS. I will. EUPH. In the fame manner what should hinder, but there may be in Nature a true Difference between Vice and Virtue, although it require some Degree of Reflexion and Judgment to observe it? In order to know whether a thing be agreeable to the rational Nature of Man, it feems one should rather observe and confult those who have most employ'd or improved

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proved their Reason. LYS. Well, I shall DIAL. not infift on confulting the common Herd of Mankind. From the ignorant and groß Vulgar, I might my felf appeal in many Cases to Men of Rank and Fashion. EUPH. They are a fort of Men I have not the Honour to know much of by my own Observation. But I remember a Remark of Aristotle, who was himself a Courtier and knew them well. 'Virtue, ' faith he, * and good Sense are not the ' Property of high Birth or a great Estate. ' Nor if they who possess these Advanta-' ges, wanting a Tafte for rational Plea-' fures, betake themselves to those of Sense; ought we therefore to esteem them eli-' gible, any more than we should the Toys ' and Pastimes of Children, because they ' feem so to them?'. And indeed one may be allowed to question, whether the truest Estimate of Things was to be expected from a Mind intoxicated with Luxury, and dazzled with the Splendor of high living.

Cùm stupet insanis acies fulgoribus, & cùm Acclinis falsis animus meliora recusat. Hor.

Crito upon this observed, that he knew an English Nobleman, who in the Prime of

^{*} Ethic. ad Nicom. 1, 10. c. 6.

DIAL. Life professeth a liberal Art, and is the II. first Man of his Profession in the World:

and that he was very sure, he had more Pleasure from the Exercise of that elegant Art, than from any sensual Enjoyment within the Power of one of the largest Fortunes, and most bountiful Spirits in Great Britain.

XVI. LYS. But why need we have Recourse to the Judgment of other Men in fo plain a Case? I appeal to your own Breast: consult that, and then say if senfible Pleasure be not the chief Good of EUPH. I, for my part, have often thought those Pleasures which are highest in the Esteem of Sensualists so far from being the chiefest Good, that it seemed doubtful upon the whole, whether they were any Good at all, any more than the meer Removal of Pain. Are not our Wants and Appetites uneafy? LYS. They are. EUPH. Doth not fenfual Pleasure confift in fatisfying them? LYS. It doth. EUPH. But the Cravings are tedious, the Satisfaction momentary. Is it not fo? LYS. It is, but what then? EUPH. Why then it should feem that sensual Pleafure is but a short Deliverance from long Pain. A long Avenue of Uneafiness leads to a Point of Pleasure, which ends in Disgust

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gust or Remorse. CRI. And he who pur-DIAL. sues this ignis fatuus imagines himself a II. Philosopher and Free-thinker. LYS. Pedants are governed by Words and Notions, while the wifer Men of Pleasure follow Fact, Nature, and Sense. CRI. But what if notional Pleasures should in fact prove the most real and lasting? Pure Pleasures of Reason and Imagination neither hurt the Health, nor waste the Fortune, nor gall the Conscience. By them the Mind is long entertained without loathing or On the other hand a Notion fatiety. (which with you it seems passeth for nothing) often embitters the most lively fenfual Pleasures, which at bottom will be found all to depend upon Notion more than perhaps you imagine: it being a vulgar Remark, that those things are more enjoyed by Hope and Foretaste of the Soul, than by Poffession. Thus much is yielded, that actual Enjoyment is very short, and the Alternative of Appetite and Difgust long as well as uneasy. that, upon the whole, it should seem those Gentlemen, who are called Men of Pleasure from their eager Pursuit of it, do in reality with great Expence of Fortune, Ease, and Health purchase Pain. LYS. You may spin out plausible Arguments, but will after all find it a difficult Matter

DIAL. Matter to convince me, that so many ingenious Men should not be able to distinguish between Things so directly opposite as Pain and Pleasure. How is it possible to account for this? CRI. I believe a Reason may be affigued for it, but to Men of Pleasure no Truth is so palatable as a Fable. Jove once upon a time having ordered, that Pleasure and Pain should be mixed in equal Proportions in every Dose of Humane Life: upon a Complaint that some Men endeavoured to separate what he had joined, and taking more than their Share of the Sweet, would leave all the Sour for others, commanded Mercury to put a stop to this Evil, by fixing on each Delinquent a Pair of invifible Spectacles, which should change the Appearance of Things, making Pain look like Pleasure, and Pleasure like Pain, Labour like Recreation, and Recreation like Labour. From that Time the Men of Pleasure are eternally mistaking and re-LYS. If your Doctrine takes place I would fain know what can be the Advantage of a great Fortune, which all Mankind so eagerly pursue? CRI. It is a common Saying with Eucrates, That a Great Fortune is an edged Tool, which a hundred may come at, for one who knows how to use it, so much easier is the Art of Getting than that of Spending. What its A vent fure and I not to we H Foot his L

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venture to declare what it is not. I am II. fure that where Abundance excludes Want, and Enjoyment prevents Appetite, there is not the quickest Sense of those Pleasures we have been speaking of: in which the Footman hath often a greater Share than his Lord, who cannot enlarge his Stomach in proportion to his Estate.

XVII. Reasonable and well-educated Men of all Ranks have, I believe, pretty much the same Amusements, notwithstanding the Difference of their Fortunes: But those who are particularly distinguished, as Men of Pleasure, seem to possess it in a very small degree. EUPH. I have heard that among Persons of that Character, a Game of Cards is esteemed a LYS. Without Cards chief Diversion. there could be no living for People of Fashion. It is the most delightful way of passing an Evening when Gentlemen and Ladies are got together, who would otherwife be at a loss what to fay or do with themselves. But a Pack of Cards is so engaging, that it doth not only employ them when they are met, but ferves to draw them together. Quadrille gives them Pleasure in prospect during the dull Hours of the Day, they reflect on it with Delight, VOL. I.

DIAL and it furnishes Discourse when it is over. CRI. One would be apt to suspect these People of Condition pass their Time but heavily, and are but little the better for their Fortunes, whose chief Amusement is a thing in the power of every Footman, who is as well qualified to receive Pleasure from Cards as a Peer. I can eafily conceive that when People of a certain Turn are got together, they should prefer doing any thing to the Ennui of their own Conversation: but it is not easy to conceive there is any great Pleasure in this. What a Card-table can afford, requires neither Parts nor Fortune to judge of. LYS. Play is a serious Amusement, that comes to the Relief of a Man of Pleasure, after the more lively and affecting Enjoyments of Sense. It kills Time beyond any thing; and is a most admirable Anodyne to divert or prevent Thought, which might otherwise prey upon the Mind. CRI. I can eafily comprehend, that no Man upon Earth ought to prize Anodynes for the

Spleen, more than a Man of Fashion and

one of that Character, faith he is made

wretched by Disappointments and Appe-

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And if this was true of the Greeks who

lived in the Sun, and had fo much Spirit,

An ancient Sage speaking of

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I am apt to think it is still more so of DIAL. our modern English. Something there is in our Climate and Complexion, that makes Idleness no where so much its own Punishment as in England, where an uneducated fine Gentleman pays for his momentary Pleasures, with long and cruel Intervals of Spleen; for relief of which he is driven into fenfual Excesses, that produce a proportionable Depression of Spirits, which, as it createth a greater Want of Pleasures, so it lessens the Ability to enjoy them. There is a Cast of Thought in the Complexion of an Englishman, which renders him the most unsuccessful Rake in the World. He is (as Aristotle expresseth it) at variance with himself. He is neither Brute enough to enjoy his Appetites, nor Man enough to govern them. knows and feels that what he pursues is not his true Good; his Reflexion ferving only to shew him that Misery which his habitual Sloth and Indolence will not fuffer him to remedy. At length being grown odious to himself, and abhorring his own Company, he runs into every idle Affembly, not from the Hopes of Pleafure, but meerly to respite the Pain of his own Mind. Liftless and uneasy at the present, he hath no Delight in reflecting on what is past, or in the Prospect of anything to 1 2

DIAL.come. This Man of Pleasure, when after a wretched Scene of Vanity and Woe his animal Nature is worn to the Stumps, wishes and dreads Death by turns, and is fick of living, without having ever tried or known the true Life of Man. EUPH. It is well this fort of Life, which is of fo little Benefit to the Owner, conduceth fo much to that of the Public. But pray tell me, do these Gentlemen set up for Minute Philosophers? CRI. That Sect you must know, contains two forts of Philosophers, the Wet and the Dry. Those I have been describing are of the former Kind. They differ rather in Practice than in Theory. As an older, graver, or duller Man, from one that is younger, and more capable or fond of Pleasure. The dry Philosopher passeth his Time but drily. He has the Honour of Pimping for the Vices of more fprightly Men, who in return offer fome fmall Incense to his Vanity. Upon this Encouragement, and to make his own Mind easy when it is past being pleased, he employs himself in justifying those Excesses he cannot partake in. But to return to your Question, those miserable Folk are mighty Men for the Minute Philoso-EUPH. What hinders them then from putting an end to their Lives? CRI. Their not being perfuaded of the Truth of

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what they profess. Some indeed, in a Fit DIAL. of Despair, do now and then lay violent hands on themselves. And as the Minute Philosophy prevails, we daily see more Examples of Suicide. But they bear no proportion to those who would put an end to their Lives if they durst. My Friend Clinias, who had been one of them, and a Philosopher of rank, let me into the secret History of their Doubts and Fears, and irresolute Resolutions of making away with themselves; which last he assures me is a frequent Topic with Men of Pleasure, when they have drunk themselves into a little Spirit. It was by virtue of this mechanical Valour the renowned Philosopher Hermocrates shot himself through the Head. The same thing hath since been practifed by feveral others, to the great Relief of their Friends. Splenetic, worried, and frightened out of their Wits, they run upon their Doom with the fame Courage as a Bird runs into the Mouth of a Rattle Snake; not because they are bold to die, but because they are afraid to live. Clinias endeavoured to fortify his Irreligion by the Discourse and Opinion of other Minute Philosophers, who were mutually strengthened in their own Unbelief by his. After this manner, Authority working in a Circle, they endeavoured to atheize one ano-

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DIAL. ther. But though he pretended, even to a Demonstration, against the Being of a God. yet he could not inwardly conquer his own Belief. He fell fick, and acknowledged this Truth; is now a fober Man and a Christian; owns he was never so happy as fince he became fuch, nor fo wretched as while he was a Minute Philosopher. who has tried both Conditions, may be allowed a proper Judge of both. LYS. Truly, a fine Account of the brightest and bravest Men of the Age! CRI. Bright and Brave are fine Attributes, But our Curate is of opinion, that all your Free-thinking Rakes are either Fools or Cowards. he argues; If fuch a Man doth not fee his true Interest he wants Sense; if he doth, but dare not pursue it, he wants Courage, In this manner, from the Defect of Sense and Courage, he deduceth that whole Species of Men, who are so apt to value themfelves upon both those Qualities. LYS. As for their Courage, they are at all times ready to give Proof of it: and for their Understanding, thanks to Nature, it is of a fize not to be measured by Country Parsons.

XVIII. EUPH. But Socrates, who was no Country Parson, suspected your Men of Pleasure were such through Ignorance. LYS. Ignorance! of what? EUPH. Of the

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Of he the Art of computing. It was his Opinion DI AL. that Rakes cannot reckon *. And that for II. want of this Skill they make wrong Judgments about Pleasure, on the right Choice of which their Happiness depends. LYS. I do not understand you. EUPH. Do you grant that Sense perceiveth only senfible things? LYS. I do. EUPH. Sense perceiveth only things present. LYS. This too I grant. EUPH. Future Pleasures. therefore, and Pleasures of the Understanding, are not to be judged of by actual LYS. They are not. Those therefore who judge of Pleasure by Sense, may find themselves mistaken at the foot of the Account.

† Cùm lapidosa chiragra
Contudit articulos veteris ramalia fagi,
Tum crassos transisse dies lucemque palustrem,
Et sibi jam seri vitam ingemuere relictam.

To make a right Computation, should you not consider all the Faculties, and all the Kinds of Pleasure, taking into your Account the Future as well as the Present, and rating them all according to their true Value? CRI. The Epicureans themselves allowed, that Pleasure which

^{*} Plato in Protag. + Perfius, Sat. 5.

DIAL. procures a greater Pain, or hinders a grea-II. ter Pleasure, should be regarded as a Pain; and, that Pain which procures a greater Pleasure, or prevents a greater Pain, is to be accounted a Pleasure. In order therefore to make a true Estimate of Pleasure. the great Spring of Action, and that from whence the Conduct of Life takes its Bias, we ought to compute intellectual Pleasures and future Pleasures, as well as present and fenfible: We ought to make Allowance in the Valuation of each particular Pleasure, for all the Pains and Evils, for all the Difgust, Remorfe, and Shame that attend it: We ought to regard both Kind and Quantity, the Sincerity, the Intenseness, and the Duration of Pleasures. Let a Free-thinker but bethink himself, how little of Humane Pleasure consists in actual Senfation, and how much in Prospect! Let him then compare the Prospect of a virtuous Believer with that of an unbelieving Rake. EUPH. And all these Points duly confidered, will not Socrates feem to have had Reason of his Side, when he thought Ignorance made Rakes, and particularly their being ignorant of what he calls the Science of More and Less, Greater and Smaller, Equality and Comparison, that is to say, of the Art of Computing? LYS. All this Discourse feems feems
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seems notional. For real Abilities of DIAL. every kind, it is well known we have the brightest Men of the Age among us. But all those who know the World do calculate, that what you call a good Christian, who hath neither a large Conscience, nor unprejudiced Mind, must be unfit for the Affairs of it. Thus you see, while you compute your felves out of Pleasure, others compute you out of Business. What then are you good for with all your Computation? EUPH. I have all imaginable Respect for the Abilities of Free-thinkers. My only Fear was, their Parts might be too lively for fuch flow Talents as Forecast and Computation, the Gifts of ordinary Men.

XIX. CRI. I cannot make them the same Compliment that Euphranor does. For though I shall not pretend to characterize the whole Sect, yet thus much I may truly affirm: That those who have sallen in my way have been mostly raw Men of Pleasure, old Sharpers in Business, or a third sort of lazy Sciolists, who are neither Men of Business, nor Men of Speculation, but set up for Judges or Critics in all kinds, without having made a Progress in any. These, among Men of the World, pass for profound Theorists,

DIAL and among speculative Men would feem to know the World: a conceited Race, equally useless to the Affairs and Studies of Mankind! Such as these, for the most part, feem to be Sectaries of the Minute I will not deny that now Philosophy. and then you may meet with a Man of eafy Manners, that, without those Faults and Affectations, is carried into the Party by the meer Stream of Education, Fafhion, or Company; all which do in this Age prejudice Men against Religion, even those who mechanically rail at Preju-I must not forget that the Minute Philosophers have also a strong Party among the Beaux and fine Ladies; and, as Affectations out of Character are often the strongest, there is nothing so dogmatical and inconvincible as one of these fine things, when it fets up for Freethinking. But, be these Professors of the Sect never fo dogmatical, their Authority must needs be small with Men of Sense. For who would choose for his Guide in the Search of Truth, a Man whose Thoughts and Time are taken up with Drefs, Vifits, and Diversions? Or whole Education hath been behind a Counter, or in an Office? Or whose Speculations have been employed on the Forms of Bufiness, who is only well read in the ways

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ays and and Commerce of Mankind, in Stock-DIAL. jobbing, Purloining, Supplanting, Bribing? Or would any Man in his Senses give a Fig for Meditations and Discoveries made over a Bottle? And yet it is certain, that instead of Thought, Books, and Study, most Free-thinkers are the Proselytes of a Drinking-Club. Their Principles are often fettled, and Decisions on the deepest Points made, when they are not fit to make a Bargain. LYS. You forget our Writers, Crito. They make a World of Profelytes. CRI. So would worse Writers in such a Cause. how few read! and of these, how few are able to judge? How many wish your Notions true? How many had rather be diverted than instructed? How many are convinced by a Title? I may allow your Reasons to be effectual, without allowing them to be good. Arguments, in themselves of small Weight, have great Effect, when they are recommended by a mistaken Interest, when they are pleaded for by Passion, when they are countenanced by the Humour of the Age: and above all, with fome fort of Men, when they are against Law, Government, and established Opinions: things which, as a wife or good Man would not depart from without clear Evidence, a weak or a bad Man will affect to disparage

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DIAL. on the flightest Grounds. LYS. And yet the Arguments of our Philosopheis alarm. CRI. The Force of their Reasoning is not what alarms: their Contempt of Laws and Government is alarming: their Application to the Young and Ignorant is dangerous. EUPH. But without disputing or disparaging their Talent at Ratiocination, it feems very possible their Success might not be owing to that alone. May it not in some measure be ascribed to the Defects of others, as well as to their own Perfections? My Friend Eucrates used to say, that the Church would thrive and flourish beyond all Opposition, if some certain Persons minded Piety more than Politics, Practics than Polemics, Fundamentals than Consectaries, Substance than Circumstance, Things than Notions, and Notions than Words. LYS. Whatever may be the Cause, the Effects are too plain to be denied. And when a confidering Man observes that our Notions do, in this most learned and knowing Age, spread and multiply, in opposition to established Laws, and every Day gain ground against a Body so numerous, fo learned, fo well supported, protected, encouraged for the Service and Defence of Religion: I fay, when a Man observes and considers all this, he will be apt

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apt to ascribe it to the force of Truth, DIAL. and the merits of our Cause; which, had it been supported with the Revenues and Establishments of the Church and Universities, you may guess what a Figure it would make, by the Figure that it makes EUPH. It is much to without them. be pitied, that the learned Profesfors of your Sect do not meet with the Encouragement they deserve. LYS. All in due time. People begin to open their Eyes. It is not impossible but those Revenues that in ignorant Times were applied to a wrong Use, may, in a more enlightned Age, be applied to a better. CRI. But why Professors and Encouragement for what needs no teaching? An Acquaintance of mine has a most ingenious Footman that can neither write nor read, who learned your whole System in half an Hour: He knows when and how to nod, shake his Head, finile, and give a Hint as well as the ablest Sceptic, and is in Fact a very Minute Philosopher. LYS. Pardon me, it takes Time to unlearn religious Prejudices, and requires a strong Head. CRI. I do not know how it might have been once upon a Time. But in the present laudable Education, I know feveral who have been imbued with no religious Notions at all; and others who have had them fo

DIAL so very slight, that they rubbed off with-II. out the least Pains.

> XX. Panope, young and beautiful, under the Care of her Aunt, an Admirer of the Minute Philosophy, was kept from learning the Principles of Religion, that The might not be accustomed to believe without a Reason, nor affent to what she did not comprehend. Panope was not indeed prejudiced with religious Notions, but got a Notion of Intriguing, and a Notion of Play, which ruined her Reputation by fourteen, and her Fortune by four and twenty. I have often reflected on the different Fate of two Brothers in my Neighbourhood. Cleon the elder being defigned an accomplished Gentleman, was fent to Town, had the first part of his Education in a great School: What Religion he learned there was foon untearned in a certain celebrated Society, which, till we have a better, may pass for a Nursery of Minute Philosophers. Cheon dreffed well, could cheat at Cards, had a nice Palate, understood the Mystery of the Die, was a mighty Man in the Minute Philosophy. And having shined a few Years in these Accomplishments, he died before thirty, childless and rotten, expressing the utmost Indignation that

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that he could not outlive that old Dog his DIAL. Father; who, having a great Notion of polite Manners, and Knowledge of the World, had purchased them to his favourite Son, with much Expence, but had been more frugal in the Education of Charephon, the younger Son; who was brought up at a Country-School, and entered a Commoner in the University, where he qualified himself for a Parsonage in his Father's Gift, which he is now possessed of, together with the Estate of the Family, and a numerous Offfpring. LYS. A Pack of unpolished Cubbs. I warrant. CRI. Less polished, perhaps, but more found, more honest, and likely to be more useful than many who pass for fine Gentlemen. Crates, a worthy Justice of the Peace in this County, having had a Son miscarry at London, by the Conversation of a Minute Philosopher, used to say with a great Air of Complaint: If a Man spoils my Corn, or hurts my Cattle, I have a Remedy against him: But if he spoils my Children, I LYS. I warrant you, he have none. was for penal Methods: He would have had a Law to perfecute tender Consciences. CRI. The render Conscience of a Minute Philosopher! He who tutored the Son of Crates, soon after did **Justice**

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on at DIAL. Justice on himself. For he taught Lycidas, a modest young Man, the Principles of his Sect. Lycidas, in return, debauched his Daughter, an only Child: Upon which, Charmides, (that was the Minute Philosopher's Name) hanged himfelf. Old Bubalion in the City is carking, and starving, and cheating, that his Son may drink and game, keep Mistresses, Hounds, and Horses, and die in a Jail. Bubalion nevertheless thinks himself wife, and passeth for one that minds the main Chance. He is a Minute Philosopher, which Learning he acquired behind the Counter, from the Works of Prodicus and Tryphon. This same Bubalion was one Night at Supper, talking against the Immortality of the Soul, with two or three grave Citizens, one of whom the next Day declared himself Bankrupt, with five thousand Pound of Bubalion's in his Hands: And the Night following he received a Note from a Servant, who had during his Lecture waited at Table, demanding the Sum of fifty Guineas to be laid under a Stone, and concluding with most terrible Threats and Imprecations. LYS. Not to repeat what hath been already demonstrated, That the Public is at bottom no Sufferer by fuch Accidents, which in truth are inconvenient only to private

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private Persons, who in their turn too may DIAL. reap the Benefit of them: I fay, not to repeat all that hath been demonstrated on that Head, I shall only ask you whether there would not be Rakes and Rogues, although we did not make them? Believe me, the World always was, and always will be the fame, as long as Men are Men. CRI. I deny that the World is always the fame. Humane Nature. to use Alciphron's Comparison, is like Land, better or worfe, as it is improved, and according to the Seeds or Principles fown in it. Though no body held your Tenets, I grant there might be bad Men by the Force of corrupt Appetites and irregular Passions. But where Men, to the Force of Appetite and Passion, add that of Opinion, and are wicked from Principle, there will be more Men wicked, and those more incurably and outrageously so. The Error of a lively Rake lies in his Passions, and may be reformed: But the dry Rogue who fets up for Judgment, is incorrigible. It is an Observation of Aristotle's, That there are two forts of Debauchees, the anearns, and the axoλaς Q, of which the one is so against his Judgment, the other with it: And that there may be hopes of the former, but none of the latter. And in VOL. I. fact

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II. who was a Minute Philosopher, when grown old, becomes a Sharper in Business.

LYS. I could name you several such who have grown most noted Patriots. CRI. Patriots! such Patriots as Catiline and Marc Antony. LYS. And what then? Those samous Romans were brave, though unsuccessful. They wanted neither Sense nor Courage; and if their Schemes had taken effect, the brisker Part of their Countrymen had been much the better for them.

XXI. The Wheels of Government go on, though wound up by different Hands: if not in the same Form, yet in some other, perhaps a better. There is an endless Variety in things: weak Men, indeed, are prejudiced towards Rules and Systemes in Life and Government: and think if these are gone, all is gone: But a Man of a great Soul and free Spirit, delights in the noble Experiment of blowing up Systemes, and disfolving Governments, to mold them anew upon other Principles, and in another Shape. Take my Word for it: there is a plastic Nature in things that feeks its own End. Pull a State to pieces, jumble, confound, and shake together the Particles of Humane Society, and then let them

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them stand a while, and you shall soon DIAL. fee them fettle of themselves in some convenient Order, where heavy Heads are lowest, and Men of Genius upper-EUPH. Lyficles speaks his Mind freely. LYS. Where was the Advantage of Free-thinking, if it were not attended with Free-speaking; or of Freespeaking, if it did not produce Free-acting? We are for thorough, independent, original Freedom. Inward Freedom without outward is good for nothing, but to fet a Man's Judgment at variance with his CRI. This free Way of Lyfi-Practice. cles may feem new to you: it is not fo to me. As the Minute Philosophers lay it down for a Maxim, That there is nothing facred of any kind, nothing but what may be made a Jest of, exploded, and changed like the Fashion of their Clothes: fo nothing is more frequent than for them toutter their Schemes and Principles, not only in felect Companies, but even in public. In a certain Part of the World, where ingenious Men are wont to retail their Speculations, I remember to have feen a Valetudinarian in a long Wig and a Cloke, fitting at the upper End of a Table, with half a dozen of Disciples about him. After he had talked about Religion in a Manner, and with an Air that would make K 2 one

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DIAL. one think, Atheism established by Law and Religion only tolerated, he entered upon Civil Government: and observed to his Audience, that the natural World was in a perpetual Circulation. Animals, faid he, who draw their Sustenance from the Earth, mix with that same Earth, and in their turn become Food for Vegetables, which again nourish the Animal Kind: The Vapours that ascend from this Globe, descend back upon it in Showers: The Elements alternately prey upon each other: That which one part of Nature loseth another gains; the Sum total remaining always the same, being neither bigger nor leffer, better nor worfe, for all these intestine Changes. Even fo, faid this learned Professor, the Revolutions in the civil World are no Detriment to Humane Kind: one part whereof rifes as the other falls, and wins by another's Loss. A Man therefore who thinks deeply, and hath an Eye on the whole Systeme, is no more a Bigot to Government than to Religion. He knows how to fuit himself to Occasions, and make the best of every Event: For the rest, he looks on all Translations of Power and Property, from one Hand to another, with a Philosophic Indifference. Our Lecturer concluded his Discourse with a most ingenious Analysis of all political and

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and moral Virtues, into their first Princi-DIAL. ples and Causes, shewing them to be meer Fashions, Tricks of State, and Illusions on the Vulgar. LYS. We have been often told of the good Effects of Religion and Learning, Churches and Universities: But I dare affirm, that a dozen or two ingenious Men of our Sect have done more towards advancing real Knowledge by extemporancous Lectures in the Compass of a few Years, than all the Ecclefiaftics put together for as many Centuries. EUPH. And the Nation no doubt thrives accordingly. But, it feems, Crito, you have heard them discourse. CRI. Upon hearing this, and other Lectures of the fame Tendency, methought it was needless to establish Professors for the Minute Philosophy in either University: while there are fo many spontaneous Lecturers in every Corner of the Streets, ready to open Mens Eyes, and rub off their Prejudices about Religion, Loyalty, and public Spirit. LYS. If Wishing was to any purpose, I could wish for a Telescope that might draw into my view things future in Time, as well as diffant in Place. Oh! that I could but look into the next Age, and behold what it is that we are preparing to be, the glorious Harvest of our Principles: the Spreading of which hath produced a vifi-K 3 ble

II.

DIAL.ble Tendency in the Nation towards something great and new. CRI. One thing I dare fay you would expect to fee, be the Changes and Agitations of the Public what they will, that is, every Freethinker upon his Legs. You are all Sons of Nature, who chearfully follow the Fortunes of the common Mass. LYS. And it must be owned we have a Maxim, that each should take care of one. CRI. Alas, Lysicles, you wrong your own Character. You would fain pass upon the World and upon your felves for interested cunning Men: But can any thing be more difinterested than to sacrifice all Regards to the abstracted Speculation of Truth? Or can any thing be more void of all Cunning than to publish your Discoveries to the World, teach others to play the whole Game, and arm Mankind against your selves?

> XXII. If a Man may venture to fuggest so mean a Thought as the Love of their Country, to Souls fired with the Love of Truth, and the Love of Liberty, and grasping the whole Extent of Nature: I would humbly propose it to you, Gentlemen, to observe the Caution practised by all other Discoverers, Projectors, and Makers of Experiments, who never hazard all on the first Trial. Would it not be prudent to try

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the Success of your Principles on a small DIAL. Model in some remote Corner? For instance, set up a Colony of Atheists in Monomotapa, and fee how it prospers, before you proceed any further at home: Half a dozen Shipload of Minute Philofophers might eafily be spared upon fo good a Defign. In the mean time, you Gentlemen, who have found out that there is nothing to be hoped or feared in another Life: that Conscience is a Bugbear: that the Bands of Government, and the Cement of Humane Society are rotten things, to be diffolved and crumbled into nothing, by the Argumentation of every Minute Philosopher: be so good as to keep these sublime Discoveries to your selves: Suffer us, our Wives, our Children, our Servants, and our Neighbours, to continue in the Belief and way of Thinking established by the Laws of our Country. In good earnest, I wish you would go try your Experiments among the Hottentots or LYS. The Hottentots we think well of, believing them to be an unprejudiced People: but it is to be feared their Diet and Customs would not agree with our Philosophers: As for the Turks, they are Bigors, who have a Notion of God and a Respect for Jesus Christ. I question whether it might be fafe to venture among K 4

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DIAL, them. CRI. Make your Experiment then in some other part of Christendom. LYS. We hold all other Christian Nations to be much under the power of Prejudice: even our Neighbours the Dutch are too much prejudiced in favour of their Religion by Law established, for a prudent Man to attempt Innovations under their Government. Upon the whole, it feems we can execute our Schemes no where with fo much Security, and fuch Prospect of Success as at home. Not to fay that we have already made a good Progress. that we could but once fee a Parliament of true, stanch, libertine Free-thinkers! CRI. God forbid! I should be forry to have fuch Men for my Servants, not to fay, for my Masters. LYS. In that we differ.

> XXIII. But you will agree with me, that the right Way to come at this was to begin with extirpating the Prejudices of particular Persons. We have carried on this Work for many Years with much Art and Industry, and at first with Secrecy, working like Moles under Ground, concealing our Progress from the Public, and our ultimate Views from many, even of our own Proselytes, blowing the Coals between polemical Divines, laying hold fortin :

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on and improving every Incident, which DIAL. the Paffions and Folly of Churchmen afforded, to the Advantage of our Sect. As our Principles obtained, we still proceeded to farther Inferences: and as our Numbers multiplied, we gradually disclosed our Selves and our Opinions: where we are now, I need not fay. We have stubbed, and weeded, and cleared Humane Nature to that degree, that in a little time, leaving it alone without any Labouring or Teaching, you shall fee natural and just Ideas sprout forth of themselves. CRI. But I have heard a Man, who had lived long, and obferved much, remark that the worst and most unwholfom Weed was this same Minute Philosophy. We have had, faid he, divers epidemical Distempers in the State, but this hath produced of all others the most destructive Plague. Enthusiasm had its Day, its Effects were violent, and foon over: This infects more quietly, but spreads widely: The former bred a Fever in the State: this breeds a Confumption and final Decay. A Rebellion, or an Invafion, alarms and puts the Public upon its Defence; but a Corruption of Principles works its Ruin more flowly perhaps, but more furely. This may be illustrated by a Fable I fomewhere met with in the Writings of a Swifs Philosopher, setting forth

II.

DIAL forth the Original of Brandy and Gunpowder. The Government of the North being once upon a time vacant, the Prince of the Power of the Air convened a Council in Hell: wherein, upon Competition between two Dæmons of Rank, it was determined they should both make trial of their Abilities, and he should succeed who did most Mischief. One made his Appearance in the Shape of Gunpowder, the other in that of Brandy: The former was a declared Enemy, and roared with a terrible Noise, which made Folks afraid, and put them on their guard: The other passed as a Friend and a Physician through the World, disguised himself with Sweets, and Perfumes, and Drugs, made his way into the Ladies Cabinets, and the Apothecaries Shops, and under the Notion of helping Digestion, comforting the Spirits, and cheering the Heart, produced direct contrary Effects; and having infenfibly thrown great numbers of Humane Kind into a lingring, but fatal Decay, was found to People Hell and the Grave so fast as to merit the Government, which he still possesses.

> XXIV. LYS. Those who please may amuse themselves with Fables and Allegories. This is plain English: Liberty is a good

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good Thing, and we are the Support of DIAL. Liberty. CRI. To me it feems that Liberty and Virtue were made for each If any Man wish to enflave his Country, nothing is a fitter Preparative than Vice: And nothing leads to Vice fo furely as Irreligion. For my part I cannot comprehend or find out, after having confidered it in all Lights, how this crying down Religion should be the Effect of honest Views towards a just and legal Liberty. Some seem to propose an Indulgence in Vice; others may have in profpect the Advantages which needy and ambitious Men are used to make in the Ruin of a State: One may indulge a pert petulant Spirit; another hope to be esteemed among Libertines, when he wants Wit to please, or Abilities to be useful. But, be Mens Views what they will, let us examine what Good your Principles have Who has been the better for the Instructions of these Minute Philosophers? Let us compare what we are in respect of Honesty, Wealth, Learning, Loyalty, Power and public Spirit with what we Free-thinking (as it is called) have been. hath wonderfully grown of late Years. Let us fee what hath grown up with it, or what Effects it hath produced. To make a Catalogue of Ills is disagreeable: And the 201

II.

DIAL the only Bleffing it can pretend to is Luxury: That same Bleffing which revenged the World upon old Rome: That fame Luxury that makes a Nation, like a difeased pampered Body, look full and fat with one Foot in the Grave. LYS. You mistake the Matter. There are no People who think and argue better about the public Good of a State than our Sect; who have also invented many Things tending to that End, which we cannot as yet conveniently put in practice. CRI. But one Point there is, from which it must be owned the Public hath already received some Advantage, which is the Effect of your Principles flowing from them, and spreading as they do: I mean that old Roman Practice of Self-murder, which at once puts an End to all Diffress, ridding the World and themselves of the miserable. LYS. You were pleased before to make fome Reflexions on this Custom, and laugh at the Irrefolution of our Freethinkers: But I can aver for Matter of Fact, that they have often recommended it by their Example as well as Arguments: And that is folely owing to them that a Practice, fo useful and magnanimous, hath been taken out of the Hands of Lunatics, and restored to that Credit among Men of Sense, which it anciently had. In what-

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whatever Light you may confider it, this DIAL. is in fact a solid Benefit. But the best Effect of our Principles is that Light and Truth fo vifibly spread abroad in the World. From how many Prejudices, Errors, Perplexities, and Contradictions have we freed the Minds of our Fellow-Subjects? How many hard Words and intricate absurd Notions had possessed the Minds of Men before our Philosophers appeared in the World? But now even Women and Children have right and found Notions of Things. What fay you to this, Crito? CRI. I say, with respect to these great Advantages of destroying Men and Notions, that I question whether the Public gains as much by the latter as it loseth by the former. For my own part I had rather my Wife and Children all believed what they had no Notion of, and daily pronounced Words without a Meaning, than that any one of them should cut his Throat, or leap out of a Window. Errors and Nonfense as such are of small Concern in the Eye of the Public, which consider not the metaphysical Truth of Notions, fo much as the Tendency they have to produce Good or Evil. Truth it felf is valued by the Public, as it hath an Influence, and is felt in the Course of Life. You may confute a whole Shelf of Schoolmen,

DIAL men, and discover many speculative Truths, without any great Merit towards your Country. But if I am not mistaken, the Minute Philosophers are not the Men to whom we are most beholden for Disco. veries of that Kind. This, I fay, must be allowed; fupposing, what I by no Means grant, your Notions to be true. For, to fay plainly what I think, the Tendency of your Opinions is fo bad, that no good Man can endure them, and your Arguments for them fo weak that no wife Man will admit them. LYS. Has it not been proved as clear as the Meridian Sun, that the politer Sort of Men lead much happier Lives, and fwim in Pleafure fince the spreading of our Principles? But, not to repeat or infift further on what has been so amply deduced, I shall only add, that the Advantages flowing from them, extend to the tenderest Age and the softer Sex. Our Principles deliver Children from Terrors by Night, and Ladies from fplenetic Hours by Day. Instead of these old fashioned Things, Prayers and the Bible, the grateful Amusements of Drams, Dice, and Billet-doux have succeeded. The fair Sex have now nothing to do but dress and paint, drink and game, adorn and divert themselves, and enter into all the sweet Society of Life. CRI. I thought, Lyficles, the

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the Argument from Pleafure had been ex-DIAL. hausted: But fince you have not done with that Point, let us once more by Euphranor's Rule cast up the Account of Pleasure and Pain, as Credit and Debt under distinct Articles. We will set down in the Life of your fine Lady, rich Clothes, Dice, Cordials, Scandal, late Hours against Vapours, Distaste, Remorse, Losses at Play, and the terrible Diffress of ill spent Age increasing every Day: Suppose no cruel Accident of Jealoufy, no Madness or Infamy of Love: Yet at the Foot of the Account you shall find that empty, giddy, gaudy, fluttering thing, not half so happy as a Butterfly, or a Grashopper on a Summer's Day. And for a Rake or Man of Pleafure, the Reckoning will be much the same, if you place Listlesness, Ignorance, Rottenness, Loathing, Craving, Quarrelling, and fuch Qualities or Accomplishments overagainst his little Circle of fleeting Amuse-Long Woe against momentary ments: Pleasure: And if it be considered, that when Sense and Appetite go off, though he feek Refuge from his Confcience in the Minute Philosophy, yet in this you will find, if you lift him to the Bottom, that he affects much, believes little, knows nothing. Upon which Lyficles turning to me observed, that Crito might dispute against Fact

DIAL. Fact if he pleased, but that every one must II. see the Nation was the merrier for their Principles. True, answered Crito, we are a merry Nation indeed: Young Men laugh at the old: Children despise their Parents: and Subjects make a Jest of the Government: Happy Effects of the Minute Philosophy!

XXV. LYS. Infer what Effects you please, that will not make our Principles less true. CRI. Their Truth is not what I am now confidering. The Point at prefent is the Usefulness of your Principles: And to decide this Point we need only take a short View of them fairly proposed and laid together: That there is no God or Providence: That Man is as the Beasts that perish: That his Happiness as theirs confifts in obeying Animal Instincts, Appetites, and Passions: That all Stings of Conscience and Sense of Guilt are Prejudices and Errors of Education: That Religion is a State Trick: That Vice is beneficial to the Public: That the Soul of Man is corporeal and diffolveth like a Flame or Vapour: That Man is a Machine actuated according to the Laws of Motion: That confequently he is no Agent or Subject of Guilt: That a wife Man will make his own particular individual Interest in this present Life,

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Life, the Rule and Measure of all his DIAL. Actions: These, and such Opinions, are, it seems, the Tenets of a Minute Philosopher, who is himself according to his own Principles an Organ play'd on by sensible Objects, a Ball bandied about by Appetites, and Passions: So subtile is he as to be able to maintain all this by artful Reasonings: So sharp-fighted and penetrating to the very Bottom of Things as to find out, that the most interested occult Cunning is the only true Wisdom. To compleat his Character, this curious Piece of Clock-Work, having no Principle of Action within it felf, and denying that it hath or can have any one free Thought or Motion, fets up for the Patron of Liberty, and earnestly contends for Free-thinking. Crito had no fooner made an end, but Lyficles addreffed himself to Euphranor and me: Crito, said he, has taken a world of Pains, but convinced me only of one fingle Point, to wit, That I must despair of Convincing him. Never did I, in the whole Course of my Life, meet with a Man fo deeply immerfed in Prejudice; let who will pull him out for me. But I entertain better Hopes of you. I can answer, said I, for my self, that my Eyes and Ears are always open to Conviction: I am attentive to all that passes, and upon the whole shall form, VOL. I.

II. Judgment. Crito, said Euphranor, is a more enterprising Man than I, thus to rate and lecture a Philosopher. For my part, I always find it easier to learn than to teach. I shall therefore beg your Assistance to rid me of some Scruples about the Tendency of your Opinions; which I find my self unable to master, though never so willing. This done, though we should not tread exactly in the same Steps, nor perhaps go the same Road; yet we shall not run in all Points diametrically opposite one to another.

XXVI. Tell me now, Lyficles, you who are a minute Observer of Things, whether a Shade be more agreeable at Morning or Evening, or Noon-day. EUPH. And Doubtless at Noon-day. what disposeth Men to Rest? LYS. Exercise. EUPH. When do Men make the greatest Fires? LYS. In the coldest Wea-EUPH. And what creates a Love for iced Liquors? LYS. Excessive Heat. EUPH. What if you raise a Pendulum to a great Height on one Side? LYS. It will, when left to it felf, ascend so much the higher on the other. EUPH. It should feem, therefore, that Darkness ensues from Light, Rest from Motion, Heat from

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from Cold, and in general that one Ex-DIAL. treme is the Consequence of another. LYS. It should seem so. EUPH. And doth not this Observation hold in the civil as well as natural World? Doth not Power produce Licence, and Licence Power? Do not Whigs make Tories, and Tories Whigs? Bigots make Atheists, and Atheists Bigots? LYS. Granting this to be true. EUPH. Will it not hence follow that as we abhor Slavish Principles, we should avoid running into licentious ones? I am, and always was, a fincere Lover of Liberty, legal English Liberty; which I esteem a chief Blessing, Ornament, and Comfort of Life, and the great Prerogative of an Englishman. But is it not to be feared, that upon the Nation's Running into a Licentiousness which hath never been endured in any civilized Country, Men feeling the intolerable Evils of one Extreme may naturally fall into the other? You must allow, the Bulk of Mankind are not Philosophers like you and Alciphron. LYS. This I readily acknowledge. EUPH. I have another Scruple about the Tendency of your Opinions. Suppose you should prevail and deftroy this Protestant Church and Clergy: How could you come at the Popish? I am credibly informed there is a great Number of Emissaries of the Church L 2

DIAL. Church of Rome disguised in England: II. Who can tell what Harvest a Clergy so numerous, fo fubtle, and fo well furnish. ed with Arguments to work on vulgar and uneducated Minds, may be able to make in a Country despoiled of all Religion and feeling the Want of it? Who can tell whether the Spirit of Free-thinking ending with the Opposition, and the Vanity with the Distinction, when the whole Nation are alike Infidels, who can tell, I fay, whether in fuch a Juncture the Men of Genius themselves may not affect a new Distinction, and be the first Converts to Popery? LYS. And suppose they should. Between Friends it would be no great Matter. These are our Maxims. In the first Place we hold it would be best to have no Religion at all. Secondly, we hold that all Religions are indifferent: If, therefore, upon Trial, we find the Country cannot do without a Religion, why not Popery as well as another? I know feveral ingenious Men of our Sect, who, if we had a Popish Prince on the Throne, would turn Papists to-morrow. This is a Paradox, but I shall explain it. A Prince whom we compliment with our Religion, to be fure must be grateful. EUPH. I understand you. But what becomes of Freethinking all the while? LYS. Oh! we should

should we fh for th Want ted by EUP the T towar Tende LYS. The ' fumm and t tolera we ar both. Thou Philo The Propa and u with, being fuffer it is shoul most

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should have more than ever of that, for DIAL. we should keep it all to our selves. As II. for the Amusement of retailing it, the Want of this would be largely compensated by folid Advantages of another Kind. EUPH. It feems then, by this Account, the Tendency you observed in the Nation towards fomething great and new proves a Tendency towards Popery and Slavery. LYS. Mistake us not, good Euphranor. The Thing first in our Intention is Confummate Liberty: But if this will not do, and there must after all be such Things tolerated as Religion and Government, we are wifely willing to make the best of both. CRI. This puts me in mind of a Thought I have often had, That Minute Philosophers are Dupes of the Jesuits. The two most avowed, professed, busy Propagators of Infidelity in all Companies, and upon all Occasions, that I ever met with, were both Bigotted Papists; and being both Men of confiderable Estates, fuffered confiderably on that Score; which it is wonderful their Thinking Disciples should never reflect upon. Hegemon, a most distinguished Writer among the Minute Philosophers, and Hero of the Sect, I am well affured, was once a Papist, and never heard that he professed any I know that many of other Religion. the L 3

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DIAL the Church of Rome abroad, are pleased with the Growth of Infidelity among us, as hoping it may make way for them. The Emissaries of Rome are known to have personated several other Sects, which from time to time have forung up amongst us; and why not this of the Minute Philosophers, of all others the best calculated to ruin both Church and State? I my felf have known a Jesuit abroad talk among English Gentlemen like a Freethinker. I am credibly informed, that Jesuits, known to be such by the Minute Philosophers at home, are admitted into their Clubs: And I have observed them to approve, and speak better of the lefuits, than of any other Clergy whatfoever. Those who are not acquainted with the fubtle Spirit, the refined Politics, and wonderful Oeconomy of that renowned Society, need only read the Account given of them by the Jesuit, Inchofer, in his Book De Monarchia Solipsorum; and those who are, will not be furprized they should be able to make Dupes of our Minute Philosophers: Dupes, I fay, for I can never think they suspect they are only Tools to serve the Ends of cunninger Men than themselves. They seem to me drunk and giddy with a false Notion of Liberty, and spur'd on by this Principle to make mad . agree in th Sche what them the Shan ness, Sava of E tenti they of then of t with ing Crit on Con tent wit wha and bett

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mad Experiments on their Country, they DIAL. agree only in pulling down all that stands II. in their Way; without any concerted Scheme, and without caring or knowing what to erect in its stead. To hear them, as I have often done, descant on the moral Virtues, resolve them into Shame, then laugh at Shame as a Weakness, admire the unconfined Lives of Savages, despise all Order and Decency of Education; one would think the Intention of these Philosophers was, when they had pruned and weeded the Notions of their Fellow-Subjects, and divested them of their Prejudices, to strip them of their Clothes, and fill the Country with naked Followers of Nature, enjoying all the Privileges of Brutality. Here Crito made a pause, and fixed his Eyes on Alciphron, who during this whole Conversation had fate thoughtful and attentive, without faying a Word; and with an Air, one while diffatisfied at what Lyficles advanced, another, ferene and pleased, seeming to approve some better Thought of his own. But the Day being now far spent, Alciphron proposed to adjourn the Argument till the following; when, faid he, I shall set Matters on a new Foundation, and in 10 full and clear a Light, as, I doubt L 4 not

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II. we changed the Discourse, and after a Repast upon cold Provisions, took a walk on the Strand, and in the cool of the Evening returned to Crito's.

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DIAL. III.

THE THIRD DIALOGUE.

I. Alciphron's account of Honour. II. Character and Conduct of Men of Honour. III. Sense of moral Beauty. IV. The Honestum or To nanov of the Ancients. V. Taste for moral Beauty whether a sure Guide or Rule. VI. Minute Philosophers ravished with the Abstract Beauty of Virtue. VII. Their Virtue alone disinterested and heroic. VIII. Beauty of sensible Objects what and how perceived? IX. The Idea of Beauty explained by Painting and Architecture. X. Beauty of the moral System, wherein it consists. XI. It supposeth a Providence. XII. Influence of το καλον and το πρέπο. XIII. Enthufiasm of Cratylus compared with the Sentiments of Aristotle. XIV. Compared with the Stoical Principles. Minute Philosophers, their Talent for Raillery and Ridicule. XVI. The Wifdom of those who make Virtue alone its own Reward.

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DIAL.

I. HE following Day as we fate round the Tea-table, in a Summer Parlour which looks into the Garden, Alciphron in

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after the first Dish turned down his Cup, and reclining back in his Chair proceeded as follows. Above all the Sects upon Earth it is the peculiar Privilege of ours, not to be tied down by any Principles. While other Philosophers profess a servile Adherence to certain Tenets, ours affert a noble Freedom, differing not only one from another, but very often the same Man from himself. Which Method of Proceeding, beside other Advantages, hath this annexed to it, that we are of all Men the hardest to confute. You may, perhaps, confute a particular Tenet, but then this affects only him who maintains it, and fo long only as he maintains it. Some of our Sect dogmatize more than others, and in fome more than other Points. The Doctrine of the Usefulness of Vice is a Point wherein we are not all agreed. Come of us are great Admirers of Virtue. With others the Points of Vice and Virtue are problemati-For my own part, though I think the Doctrine maintained Yesterday by Lyficles an ingenious Speculation; yet, upon the whole, there are divers Reasons which incline

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incline me to depart from it, and rather DIAL. to espouse the virtuous side of the Question; III. with the smallest, perhap, but the most contemplative and laudable Part of our Sect. It seemeth, I say, after a nice Inquiry and balancing on both fides, that we ought to prefer Virtue to Vice; and that fuch Preference would contribute both to the public Weal, and the Reputation of our Philosophers. You are to know then, we have among us feveral that without one Grain of Religion, are Men of the nicest Honour, and therefore Men of Virtue, because Men of Honour. Honour is a noble unpolluted Source of Virtue, without the least Mixture of Fear, Interest, or Superstition. It hath all the Advantages, without the Evils, which attend Religion. It is the Mark of a great and fine Soul, and is to be found among Persons of It affects the Court, Rank and Breeding. the Senate, and the Camp, and in general every Rendezvous of People of Fashion. EUPH. You fay then, That Honour is the Source of Virtue. ALC. I do. EUPH.Can a thing be the Source of it felf? ALC. It cannot. EUPH. The Source, therefore, is distinguished from that of which it is the Source. ALC. Doubtless. EUPH. Honour then is one thing, and Virtue another. ALC. I grant it. Virtu-

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DIAL. ous Actions are the Effect, and Honour is III. the Source or Cause of that Effect. EUPH. Tell me. Is Honour the Will producing those Actions, or the final Cause for which they are produced; or right Reason, which is their Rule and Limit, or the Object about which they are conversant? Or do you by the Word Honour understand a Faculty, or Appetite? All which are supposed, in one Sense or other, to be the Source of Humane ALC. Nothing of all this. Actions. EUPH. Be pleased then to give me some Notion or Definition of it. Alcipbron having mused a while answered, that he defined Honour to be a Principle of virtuous To which Euphranor replied; if I understand it rightly, the Word Principle is variously taken. Sometimes by Principles, we mean the Parts of which a Whole is composed, and into which it may be refolved. Thus the Elements are faid to be Principles of compound Bodies. And thus Words, Syllables, and Letters are the Principles of Speech. Sometimes by

Principle we mean a fmall particular Seed,

the Growth or gradual Unfolding of which

doth produce an organized Body, animal or vegetable, in its proper Size and Shape.

Principles at other times are supposed to

be certain fundamental Theorems in Arts

and Sciences, in Religion and Politics.

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Let me know in which of these Senses, DIAL. or whether it be in some other Sense, that you understand the Word, when you fay, Honour is a Principle of Virtue. To this Alciphron replied, that for his part, he meant it in none of those Senses. but defined Honour to be a certain Ardour or Enthusiasm that glowed in the Breast of a gallant Man. Upon this, Euphranor obferved, it was always admitted to put the Definition in place of the thing defined. Is this allowed, faid he, or not? ALC. EUPH. May we not therefore fay, that a Man of Honour is a warm Man. or an Enthusiast? Alcipbron hearing this, declared, that fuch Exactness was to no purpose; that Pedants, indeed, may dispute and define, but could never reach that high Sense of Honour which distinguished the fine Gentleman, and was a thing rather to be felt than explained.

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cs. Jet II. Crito, perceiving that Alciphron could not bear being pressed any farther on that Article, and willing to give some Satisfaction to Euphranor, said, That of himself indeed he should not undertake to explain so nice a Point; but he would retail to them part of a Conversation he once heard between Nicander a Minute Philosopher, and Menecles a Christian,

upon

DIAL upon the same Subject, which was for Substance as follows. M. From what Principle are you Gentlemen virtuous? N. From Honour. We are Men of Honour. M. May not a Man of Honour debauch another's Wife, or get drunk, or fell a Vote, or refuse to pay his Debts, without lessening or tainting his Honour? N. He may have the Vices and Faults of a Gentleman: But is obliged to pay Debts of Honour, that is, all fuch as are contracted by Play. M. Is not your Man of Honour always ready to refent Affronts, and engage in Duels? N. He is ready to demand and give Gentleman's Satisfaction upon all proper Occasions. M. It should feem by this Account, that to ruin Tradesmen, break Faith to one's ownWife, corrupt another Man's, take Bribes, cheat the Public, cut a Man's Throat for a Word, are all Points confistent with your Principle of Honour. N. It cannot be denied that we are Men of Gallantry, Men of Fire, Men who know the World, and all that. M. It feems therefore that Honour among Infidels is like Honesty among Pirates: fomething confined to themselves, and which the Fraternity perhaps may find their Account in, but every one else should be on his guard against. By this Dialogue, continued Crito,

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Crito, a Man who lives out of the grand DIAL. Monde, may be enabled to form some Notion of what the World calls Honour, and Men of Honour. EUPH. I must intreat you not to put me off with Nicander's Opinion, whom I know nothing of: but rather give me your own Judgment, drawn from your own Observation upon Men of Honour. CRI. If I must pronounce, I can very fincerely affure you that by all I have heard or feen, I could never find, that Honour, confidered as a Principle distinct from Conscience, Religion, Reason, and Virtue, was more than an empty Name. And I do verily believe, that those who build upon that Notion have less Virtue than other Men; and that what they have or feem to have, is owing to Fashion, (being of the reputable Kind) if not to a Conscience early imbued with religious Principles, and afterwards retaining a Tincture from them, without knowing it. These two Principles seem to account for all that looks like Virtue in those Gentlemen. Your Men of Fashion, in whom animal Life abounds, a fort of Bullies in Morality, who disdain to have it thought they are afraid of Conscience; these descant much upon Honour, and affect to be called Men of Honour, rather than conscientious or honest Men. by

DIAL. by all that I could ever observe, this spe-III. cious Character, where there is nothing of Conscience or Religion underneath, to give it Life and Substance, is no better than a Meteor or painted Cloud. EUPH. I had a confused Notion that Honour was fomething nearly connected with Truth: and that Men of Honour were the greateft Enemies to all Hypocrify, Fallacy, and Disguise. CRI. So far from that, an Infidel, who fets up for the nicest Honour, shall, without the least grain of Faith or Religion, pretend himself a Christian, take any Test, join in any Act of Worship, kneel, pray, receive the Sacrament to ferve an Interest. The same Person, without any Impeachment of his Honour, shall most folemnly declare and promife, in the face of God and the World, that he will love his Wife, and forfaking all others, keep only to her, when at the fame time it is certain, he intends never to perform one Tittle of his Vow; and convinceth the whole World of this as foon as he gets her in his Power, and her Fortune, for the fake of which this Man of untainted Honour makes no Scruple to cheat and lye. EUPH. We have a Notion here in the Country, that it was of all things most odious, and a Matter of much Risque and Peril, to give the Lye

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to a Man of Honour. CRI. It is very DIAL. true. He abhors to take the Lye, but not III. to tell it.

III. Alciphron, having heard all this with great Composure of Mind and Countenance, spake as follows. You are not to think, that our greatest Strength lies in our greatest Number, Libertines, and meer Men of Honour. No: we have among us Philosophers of a very different Character, Men of curious Contemplation, not governed by fuch gross things as Sense and Custom, but of an abstracted Virtue and sublime Morals: and the less religious the more virtuous. For Virtue of the high and difinterested Kind, no Man is so well qualified as an Infidel, it being a mean and felfish thing to be virtuous through Fear or Hope. The Notion of a Providence, and future State of Rewards and Punishments, may indeed tempt or scare Men of abject Spirit into Practices contrary to the natural Bent of their Souls, but will never produce a true and genuine Virtue. To go to the bottom of things, to analyse Virtue into its first Principles, and fix a Scheme of Duty on its true Basis, you must understand, that there is an Idea of Beauty This all natural to the Mind of Man. Men defire, this they are pleased and delighted VOL. I. M

DIAL delighted with for its own fake, purely III. from an Inflinct of Nature. A Man needs no Arguments to make him difcern and approve what is beautiful; it strikes at first Sight, and attracts without a Reason. And as this Beauty is found in the Shape and Form of corporeal Things; so also is there analogous to it, a Beauty of another Kind, an Order, a Symmetry, and Comeliness in the moral World. And as the Eye perceiveth the one, so the Mind doth, by a certain interior Sense, perceive the other; which Sense, Talent, or Faculty, is ever quickest and purest in the noblest Minds. Thus as by Sight I difcern the Beauty of a Plant or an Animal, even so the Mind apprehends the moral Excellence, the Beauty, and Decorum of Justice and Temperance. And as we readily pronounce a. Dress becoming or an Attitude graceful, we can, with the same free untutored Judgment, at once declare, whether this or that Conduct or Action be comely and beautiful. To relish this kind of Beauty, there must be a delicate and fine Taste: But where there is this natural Taste, nothing further is wanting, either as a Principle to convince, or as a Motive to induce Men to the Love of Virtue. And more or less there is of this Tafte or Sense in every Creature that hath Reason.

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Reason. All rational Beings are by na-DIAL. ture focial. They are drawn one towards another by natural Affections. They unite and incorporate into Families, Clubs, Parrice, and Commonwealths by mutual Sympathy. As by means of the fenfitive Soull our feveral diffinct Parts and Members do confent towards the animal Functions, and are connected in one Whole: Even fo, the feveral Parts of these rational Systems, or Bodies Politic, by virtue of this moral or interior Sense, are held together, have a Fellow-feeling, do fuccour and protect each other, and jointly cooperate towards the fame End. Hence that Joy in Society, that Propension towards doing good to our Kind, that Gratulation and Delight in beholding the virtuous Deeds of other Men. or in reflecting on our own. By Contemplation of the Fitness and Order of the Parts of moral System, regularly operating, and knit together by benevolent Affections, the Mind of Man attaineth to the highest Notion of Beauty, Excellence, and Perfection. Seized and rapt with this fublime Idea, our Philosophers do infinitely despise and pity whoever shall propose or accept any other Motive to Virtue. Interest is a mean ungenerous thing, destroying the Merit of Virtue: and Falshood of every kind is inconfistent with the genuine Spirit M 2 of

DIAL of Philosophy CRI. The Love therefore that you bear to moral Beauty, and your Paffion for abfracted Truth, will not suffer you to think with Patience of those fraudulent Impositions upon Mankind, Providence, the Immortality of the Soul, and a future Retribution of Rewards and Punishments, which under the Notion of promoting, do, it feems, deftroy all true Virtue, and at the same time contradict and disparage your noble Theories, manifestly tending to the Perturbation and Disquiet of Mens Minds, and filling them with fruitless Hopes, and vain Terrors. ALC. Mens first Thoughts and natural Notions are the best in moral Matters. And there is no need that Mankind should be preached, or reasoned, or frightened into Virtue, a thing so natural and congenial to every Humane Soul. Now if this be the Case, as it certainly is, it follows that all the Ends of Society are secured without Religion, and that an Infidel bids fair to be the most virtuous Man, in a true, sublime, and heroic Sense.

IV. EUPH. O Alciphron! while you talk, I feel an Affection in my Soul, like the Trembling of one Lute upon striking the unison Strings of another. Doubtless there is a Beauty of the Mind, a Charm in Virtue,

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Virtue, a Symmetry and Proportion in the DIAL. moral World. This moral Beauty was III. known to the Ancients by the Name of Honestum, or To xahov. And in order to know its Force and Influence, it may not be amiss to inquire, what it was understood to be, and what Light it was placed in by those who first considered it, and gave it a Name. To xaxor, according to Aristotle, is the emainerou, or laudable: according to Plato, it is the now, or woeking, pleafant, or profitable, which is meant with respect to a reasonable Mind, and its true Interest. Now I would fain know whether a Mind, which confiders an Action as laudable, be not carried beyond the bare Action it felf, to regard the Opinion of others concerning it? ALC. It is. EUPH. And whether this be a fufficient Ground or Principle of Virtue, for a Man to act upon, when he thinks himfelf removed from the Eye and Observation of every other intelligent Being? ALC. It feems not. EUPH. Again, I ask whether a Man, who doth a thing pleafant or profitable as fuch, might not be suppofed to forbear doing it, or even to do the contrary, upon the prospect of greater Pleasure or Profit? ALC. He might. EUPH. Doth it not follow from hence, that the Beauty of Virtue, or To xalov, in M 3 either

DIAL either Ariftotle's or Plato's Senfe, is not a fufficient Principle of Ground, to engage fenfual and worldly-minded Men in the Practice of it! ALC. What then? EUPH. Why, then it will follow that Hope of Reward and Fear of Punishment are highly expedient to cast the Balance of Pleafant and Profitable on the Side of Virtue, and thereby very much conduce to the Benefit of Humane Society. Alciphron upon this appealed: Gentlemen, said he, you are Witnesses of this unfair Proceeding of Euphranor, who argues against us, from Explications given by Plato and Aristotle of the Beauty of Virtue, which are things we have nothing to fay to; the Philosophers of our Sect abstracting from all Praise, Pleasure, and Interest, when they are enamoured and transported with I beg pardon, replied that fublime Idea. Euphranor, for supposing the Minute Philosophers of our Days think like those ancient Sages. But you must tell me, Alciphron, fince you do not think fit, to adopt the Sense of Plato or Aristotle, what Sense it is in which you understand the Beauty of Virtue? Define it, explain it, make me to understand your Meaning, that so we may argue about the same thing, without which we can never come to a Conclufion.

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V. ALC. Some things are better un DIAL. derstood by Definitions and Descriptions: but I have always observed, that those who would define, explain, and dispute about this Point, make the least of it. Moral Beauty is of fo peculiar and abstracted a nature, fomething to fubtile, fine, and fugacious, that it will not bear being handled and inspected, like every gross and common Subject. You will, therefore, pardon me, if I stand upon my Philosophic Liberty; and choose rather to intrench my Self, within the general and indefinite Sense, rather than, by entering into a precise and particular Explication of this Beauty, perchance lose fight of it; or give you some Hold whereon to cavil, and infer, and raife Doubts, Queries, and Difficulties about a Point as clear as the Sun, when no body reasons upon it. EUPH. How say you, Alciphron, is that Notion clearest when it is not confidered? ALC. I fay, it is rather to be felt than understood, a certain je ne sçay quoy. An Object, not of the discursive Faculty, but of a peculiar Sense, which is properly called the moral Sense, being adapted to the Perception of moral Beauty, as the Eye to Colours, or the Ear to Sounds. EUPH. That Men have certain instinctive Sensations or Pasfions from Nature, which make them amiable M 4

DIAL amiable and useful to each other, I am JIII Clearly convinced. Such are a Fellow-feeling with the Distressed, a Tenderness for our Offspring, an Affection towards our Friends, our Neighbours, and our Country, an Indignation against things base, cruel, or unjust. These Passions are implanted in the Humane Soul, with feveral other Fears and Appetites, Aversions and Desires, some of which are strongest and uppermost in one Mind, others in another. Should it not therefore feem a very uncertain Guide in Morals, for a Man to follow his Passion or inward Feeling? And would not this Rule infallibly lead different Men different ways, according to the Prevalency of this or that Appetite or Passion? ALC. I do not deny it. EUPH. And will it not follow from hence, that Duty and Virtue are in a fairer way of being practifed, if Men are led by Reason and Judgment; balancing low and fenfual Pleasures with those of a higher Kind, comparing present Losses with future Gains, and the Uneafiness and Disgust of every Vice, with the delightful Practice of the opposite Virtue, and the pleasing Reflexions and Hopes which attend it? Or, can there be a stronger Motive to Virtue, than the shewing that considered in all Lights it is every Man's true Interest? VI. ALC.

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VI. ALC. I tell you, Euphranor, we DIAL. contemn the Virtue of that Man, who III. computes and deliberates, and must have a Reason for being virtuous. The refined Moralists of our Sect are ravished and transported with the abstract Beauty of Virtue. They disdain all forinsecal Motives to it; and love Virtue only for Virtue's sake. Oh Rapture! Oh Enthusiasm! Oh the Quintessence of Beauty! Methinks I could dwell for ever on this Contemplation. But rather than entertain my felf, I must endeavour to convince you. Make an Experiment on the first Man Propose a villanous or unyou meet. just Action. Take his first Sense of the Matter, and you shall find he detests it. He may, indeed, be afterwards misled by Arguments, or overpowered by Temptation; but his original, unpremeditated, and genuine Thoughts, are just and orthodox. How can we account for this but by a moral Sense, which, left to it self, hath as quick and true a Perception of the Beauty and Deformity of Humane Actions, as the Eye hath of Colours. EUPH. May not this be fufficiently accounted for, by Conscience, Affection, Passion, Education, Reason, Custom, Religion, which Principles and Habits, for ought I know, may be what you metaphorically call a Moral Sense?

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DIAL. Sense? ALC. What I call a Moral Sense, is III. frictly, properly, and truly fuch, and in Kind different from all those things you enumerate. It is what all Men have, though all may not observe it. Upon this, Euphranor smiled, and said, Alcipbron has made Discoveries where I least expected it. For, faid he, in regard to every other Point, I should hope to learn from him: but for the Knowledge of my felf, or the Faculties and Powers of my own Mind, I should have looked at home. And there I might have looked long enough, without finding this new Talent, which even now after being tutored I cannot comprehend. Alciphron, I must needs fay, is too Sublime and Enigmatical upon a Point, which of all others ought to be most clearly understood. I have often heard that your deepest Adepts and oldest Professors in Science are the obscurest. Lyficles is young, and speaks Would he but favour us with his Sense of this Point, it might perhaps prove more upon a Level with my Apprehension.

VII. Lysicles shook his Head, and in a grave and earnest manner addressed the Company. Gentlemen, said he, Alciphron stands upon his own Legs. I have no part in these refined Notions he is at present engaged to defend. If I must subdue my Passions,

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Paffions, abstract, contemplate, be ena-DIAL. moured of Virtue; in a word, if I must 111. be an Enthusiast: I owe so much Deference to the Laws of my Country, as to choose being an Enthusiast in their way. Befides, it is better being fo for some End than for none. This Doctrine hath all the for lid Inconveniencies, without the amufing Hopes and Prospects of the Christian. ALC. I never counted on Lyficles for my Second in this Point; which after all doth not need his Affistance or Explication. All Subjects ought not to be treated in the fame manner. The way of Definition and Divifion is dry and pedantic. Besides, the Subject is fometimes too obscure, fometimes too simple for this Method. One while we know too little of a Point, another too much, to make it plainer by Discourse. CRI. To hear Alciphron talk, puts me in mind of that ingenious Greek, who having wrapt a Man's Brother up in a Cloke, asked him whether he knew that Person? being ready, either by keeping on, or pulling off the Cloke, to confute his Answer, whatever it should be. For my part, I believe, if Matters were fairly stated, that rational Satisfaction, that Peace of Mind. that inward Comfort, and conscientious Joy, which a good Christian finds in good Actions, would not be found to fall shore of

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e my Tions, DIAL of all the Ecstafy, Rapture, and Enthusiasin supposed to be the Effect of that high and undescribed Principle. In earnest can any Ecstafy be higher, any Rapture more affecing, than that which springs from the Love of God and Man, from a Conscience void of Offence, and an inward Discharge of Duty, with the secret Delight, Trust, and Hope that attend it? ALC. O Euphranor, we Votaries of Truth do not envy, but pity, the groundless Joys and mistaken Hopes of a Christian. And, as for Confcience and rational Pleasure, How can we allow a Conscience without allowing a vindictive Providence? Or how can we suppose, the Charm of Virtue consists in any Pleasure, or Benefit attending virtuous Actions, without giving great Advantages to the Christian Religion, which, it seems excites its Believers to Virtue by the highest Interests and Pleasures in Reversion. Alas! shou'd we grant this, there would be a Door opened to all those rusty Declaimers upon the Necessity and Usefulness of the great Points of Faith, the Immortality of the Soul, a Future State, Rewards and Punishments, and the like exploded Conceits; which, according to our System and Principles, may perhaps produce a low, popular, interested Kind of Virtue, but must absolutely destroy and extinguish it in the sublime and heroic Sense.

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VIII. EUPH. What you now fay is DIAL. very intelligible: I wish I understood your III. main Principle as well. ALC. And are you then in earnest at a loss? Is it possible you should have no Notion of Beauty, or that having it you should not know it to be amiable, amiable I say, in it felf, and for it felf? EUPH. Pray tell me, Alciphron, are all Mankind agreed in the Notion of a beauteous Face ? ALC. Beauty in Humane Kind feems to be of a more mixt and various Nature: forafmuch as the Paffions, Sentiments, and Qualities of the Soul being feen through and blending with the Features, work differently on different Minds, as the Sympathy is more or less. But with regard to other things is there no steady Principle of Beauty? Is there upon Earth a Humane Mind without the Idea of Order, Harmony, and Proportion? EUPH. O Alciphron, it is my Weakness that I am apt to be lost in Abfiractions and Generalities, but a particular thing is better fuited to my Faculties. find it easy to consider and keep in View the Objects of Sense; let us therefore try to discover what their Beauty is, or wherein it confifts; and fo, by the help of these tenfible things, as a Scale or Ladder, ascend to moral and intellectual Beauty. Be pleased then to inform me, what it is we call Beauty

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DIAL Beauty in the Objects of Sense? ALC. Every one knows Beauty is that which pleafes. BUPH. There is then Beauty in the Smelt of a Rose, or the Taste of an Apple. ALC. By no means. Beauty is. to speak properly, perceived only by the Eye. EUPH. It cannot therefore be defined in gneral that which pleaseth. ALC. I grant it cannot. EUPH. How then shall we limit or define it? Alcipbron, after a short Pause, said, that Beauty consisted in a certain Symmery or Proportion pleafing to the Eye. EUPH. Is this Proportion one and the same in all things, or it is different in different Kinds of Things? ALC. Different doubtless. The Proportions of an Ox would not be beautiful in an Horse, And we observe also in things Inanimate, that the Beauty of a Table, a Chair, a Door, consists in different Proportions. EUPH. Doth not this Proportion imply the Relation of one thing to another? ALC. It doth. EUPH. And are not these Relations founded in Size and Shape? ALC. They are. EUPH. And to make the Proportions just, must not those mutual Relations of Size and Shape in the Parts be fuch, as shall make the whole compleat and perfect in its Kind? ALC. I grant they must. EUPH. Is not a thing said to be perfect in its Kind, when it answers the "Sala End

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End for which it was made? ALC. It is. DIAL. EUPH. The Parts, therefore, in true Proportions must be related, and adjusted to one another, as that they may best confpire to the Use and Operation of the Whole. ALC. It feems fo. EUPH. But the comparing Parts one with another, the confidering them as belonging to one Whole, and the referring this Whole to its Use or End, should feem the Work of Reason: Should it not? ALC. It should, EUPH. Proportions therefore are not, strictly speaking, perceived by the Sense of Sight, but only by Reason through the Means of Sight. ALC. This I grant. EUPH. Confequently Beauty, in your Sense of it, is an Object, not of the Eye, but of the Mind. ALC. It is. EUPH. The Eye, therefore, alone cannot see that a Chair is handsom, or a Door well proportioned. ALC. It feems to follow; but I am not clear as to this Point. EUPH. Let us see if there be any Difficulty in it. Could the Chair you fit on, think you, be reckon'd well proportioned or handsom, if it had not fuch a Height, Breadth, Wideness, and was not so far reclined as to afford a convenient Seat? ALC. It could not. EUPH. The Beauty, therefore, or Symmetry of a Chair cannot be apprehended but by knowing its use, and comparing its Figure with that

DIAL, that use, which cannot be done by the Eve alone, but is the Effect of Judgment. It is therefore, one thing to fee an Object. and another to difcern its Beauty. ALC. I admit this to be true.

> IX. EUPH. The Architects judge a Door to be of a beautiful Proportion, when its Height is double of the Breadth. But if you should invert a well-proportion'd Door making its Breadth become the Height, and its Height the Breadth, the Figure would still be the same, but without that Beauty in one Situation, which it had in another. What can be the Cause of this, but that in the forementioned Suppofition, the Door would not yield a convenient Entrance to Creatures of a Humane Figure? But, if in any other Part of the Universe, there should be supposed rational Animals of an inverted Stature, they must be supposed to invert the Rule for Proportion of Doors: and to them that would appear beautiful, which to us was difagreeable. ALC. Against this I have no Objection. EUPH. Tell me, Alciphron, is there not fomething truly decent and beautiful in Dress? ALC. Doubtless there is. EUPH. Are any likelier to give us an Idea of this Beauty in Dress, than Painters and Sculptors, whose proper Business and Study

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it is, to aim at graceful Representations? DIAL. ALC. I believe not. EUPH. Let us then examine the Draperies of the great Masters in these Arts: How, for instance, they use to clothe a Matron, or a Man of Rank. Cast an eye on those Figures: (said he, pointing to some Prints after Raphael and Guido, that hung upon the Wall) what Appearance, do you think, an English Courtier or Magistrate, with his Gothic, fuccinct, plaited Garment, and his fullbottom'd Wig; or one of our Ladies in her unnatural Dress, pinched, and stiffened, and enlarged with Hoops and Whale-bone, and Buckram, must make; among those Figures fo decently clad in Draperies, that fall into fuch a variety of natural, eafy, and ample Folds; that appear with fo much Dignity and Simplicity; that cover the Body without incumbering it, and adorn without altering the Shape? ALC. Truly, I think they must make a very ridiculous Appearance. EUPH. And what do you think this proceeds from? Whence is it that the Eastern Nations, the Greeks, and the Romans, naturally ran into the most becoming Dreffes; while our Gothic Gentry, after fo many Centuries racking their Inventions, mending, and altering, and improving, and whirling about in a perpetual Rotation of Fashions, have never VOL. I. N yet

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DIAL. yet had the Luck to stumble on any that was not abfurd and ridiculous? Is it not from hence, that instead of consulting Use, Reafon, and Convenience, they abandon themfelves to irregular Fancy, the unnatural Parent of Monsters? Whereas the Ancients, confidering the Use and End of Dress, made it subservient to the Freedom, Ease, and Convenience of the Body, and, having no Notion of mending or changing the natural Shape, they aimed only at shewing it with Decency and Advantage. And, if this be fo, are we not to conclude that the Beauty of Dress depends on its Subserviency to certain Ends and Uses? ALC. This appears to be true. EUPH. This subordinate relative Nature of Beauty, perhaps will be yet plainer, if we examine the respective Beauties of a Horse and a Pillar. Virgil's Description of the former is.

> Argutumque caput, brevis alvus, obesaque terga, Luxuriat que toris animosum pectus.

Now I would fain know, whether the Perfections and Uses of a Horse may not be reduced to these three Points, Courage, Strength, and Speed? and whether each of the Beauties enumerated doth not occasion, or betoken one of these Perfections? As-

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ter the same manner, if we inquire into DIAL. the Parts and Proportions of a beautiful Pillar, we shall perhaps find them answer to this same Idea. Those who have confidered the Theory of Architecture, tell us*, the Proportions of the three Grecian Orders were taken from the Humane Body, as the most beautiful and perfect Production of Nature. Hence were derived those graceful Ideas of Columns, which had a Character of Strength without Clumfiness, or of Delicacy without Weakness. Those beautiful Proportions were, I fay, taken. originally from Nature, which, in her Creatures, as hath been already observed, referreth them to some End, Use, or Design. The Gonfiezza also, or Swelling, and the Diminution of a Pillar, is it not in fuch Proportion, as to make it appear strong and light at the fame time? In the fame manner, must not the whole Entablature, with its Projections, be so proportioned as to seem great but not heavy, light but not little; inasmuch as a Deviation into either Extreme would thwart that Reason and Use of Things, wherein their Beauty is founded, and to which it is subordinate? The Entablature, and all its Parts and Ornaments, Architrave, Freeze, Cornice, Triglyphs,

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^{*} See the learned Patriarch of Aquileia's Commentary on Vitruvius, 1. 4. c. 1.

DIAL. Metopes, Modiglions, and the rest, have each an Use, or Appearance of Use, in giving Firmness and Union to the Building, in protecting it from the Weather, and casting off the Rain, in representing the Ends of Beams with their Intervals, the Production of Rafters, and fo forth. And if we confider the graceful Angles in Frontispieces, the Spaces between the Columns, or the Ornaments of their Capitels; shall we not find, that their Beauty rifeth from the Appearance of of Use, or the Imitation of natural Things, whose Beauty is originally founded on the same Principle? which is, indeed, the grand Distinction between Gracian and Gothic Architecture; the latter being fantastical, and for the most part founded neither in Nature, nor in Reason, in Necessity nor Use, the Appearance of which accounts for all the Beauty, Grace, and Ornament of the other. CRI. What Euphranor has faid confirms the Opinion I always entertained, that the Rules of Architecture were founded, as all other Arts which flourished among the Greeks, in Truth, and Nature, and good Sense. But the Ancients, who, from a thorough Confideration of the Grounds and Principles of Art, formed their Idea of Beauty, did not always confine themselves strictly to the fame Rules and Proportions: But, when-

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ever the particular Distance, Position, Ele-DIAL. vation, or Dimension of the Fabric, or its Parts feemed to require it, made no Scruple to depart from them, without deferting the original Principles of Beauty, which governed whatever Deviations they made. This Latitude or License might not, perhaps, be fafely trusted with most modern Architects, who in their bold Sallies feem to act without Aim or Defign; and to be governed by no Idea, no Reason, or Principle of Art, but pure Caprice, joined with a thorough Contempt of that noble Simplicity of the Ancients, without which there can be no Unity, Gracefulness, or Grandeur in their Works; which of confequence must ferve only to disfigure and dishonour the Nation, being so many Monuments to future Ages of the Opulence and ill Taste of the present; which, it is to be feared, would fucceed as wretchedly and make as mad Work in other Affairs, were Men to follow, instead of Rules, Precepts, and Models, their own Tafte and first Thoughts of Beauty. ALC. I should now, methinks, be glad to see a little more distinctly, the Use and Tendency of this Di-EUPH. Was gression upon Architecture. not Beauty the very thing we inquired EUPH. What ALC. It was. think you, Alciphron, can the Appearance of

DIAL of a thing please at this Time, and in this Place, which pleafed two thousand Years ago, and two thousand Miles off, without some real Principle of Beauty? ALC. It cannot. EUPH. And is not this the Case with respect to a just Piece of Architecture? ALC. No body denies it. EUPH. Architecture, the noble Offspring of Judgment and Fancy, was gradually formed in the most polite and knowing Countries of Afia, Egypt, Greece, and Italy. It was cherished and esteemed by the most flourishing States, and most renowned Princes, who with vast Expence improved and brought it to Perfection. It feems, above all other Arts, peculiarly conversant about Order, Proportion, and Symmetry. Mayit not therefore be supposed on all accounts, most likely to help us to some rational Notion of the je ne sçay quoy in Beauty? And, in effect, have we not learned from this Digression, that as there is no Beauty without Proportion, so Proportions are to be esteemed just and true, only as they are relative to some certain Use or End, their Aptitude and Subordination to which End is, at bottom, that which makes them please and charm? ALC. I admit all this to be true.

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X. EUPH. According to this Doctrine, DI AL. I would fain know what Beauty can be III. found in a moral System, formed, connected, and governed by Chance, Fate or any other blind unthinking Principle? Forafmuch as without Thought there can be no End or Defign; and without an End there can be no Use, and without Use there is no Aptitude or Fitness of Proportion, from whence Beauty springs. ALC. May we not suppose a certain vital Principle of Beauty, Order, and Harmony diffused throughout the World, without supposing a Providence inspecting, punishing, and rewarding the moral Actions of Men? Without supposing the Immortality of the Soul, or a Life to come; in a word, without admitting any Part of what is commonly called Faith, Worship, and Religion? CRI. Either you suppose this Principle intelligent, or not intelligent: If the latter, it is all one with Chance, or Fate, which was just now argued against: If the former, let me intreat Alcipbron to explain to me, wherein confifts the Beauty of a moral System, with a supreme Intelligence at the Head of it, which neither protects the Innocent, punishes the Wicked, nor rewards the Virtuous? To suppose indeed a Society of rational Agents acting under the Eye of Providence, concurring N 4

DIAL in one Defign to promote the common Be-III. nefit of the Whole, and conforming their Actions to the established Laws and Order of the Divine Parental Wisdom: Wherein each particular Agent shall not consider himself apart, but as the Member of a great City, whose Author and Founder is God: In which the Civil Laws are no other, than the Rules of Virtue, and the Duties of Religion: And where every one's true Interest is combined with his Duty: To suppose this would be delightful: On this Supposition, a Man need be no Stoic or Knight-errant, to account for his Vir-In fuch a System Vice is Madness, Cunning is Folly, Wisdom and Virtue are the fame thing, where, notwithstanding all the crooked Paths and By-roads, the wayward Appetites and Inclinations of Men, fovereign Reason is sure to reform whatever feems amifs, to reduce that which is devious, make straight that which is crooked, and in the last Act, wind up the whole Plot, according to the exactest Rules of Wisdom and Justice. In such a System or Society, governed by the wisest Precepts, enforced by the highest Rewards and Discouragements, it is delightful to consider, how the Regulation of Laws, the Distribution of Good and Evil, the Aim of moral Agents, do all conspire in due Subordination

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ordination to promote the noblest End, to DIAL.
wit, the compleat Happiness or Well- III.
being of the whole. In contemplating the
Beauty of such a moral System, we may
cry out with the Psalmist, Very excellent
Things are spoken of thee, thou City of God.

XI. In a System of Spirits, subordinate to the Will, and under the Direction, of the Father of Spirits, governing them by Laws, and conducting them by Methods fuitable to wife and good Ends, there will be great Beauty. But in an incoherent fortuitous System, governed by Chance, or in a blind System governed by Fate, or in any System where Providence doth not preside, how can Beauty be, which cannot be without Order, which cannot be without Defign? When a Man is conscious that his Will is inwardly conformed to the Divine Will, producing Order and Harmony in the Universe, and conducting the whole by the justest 'Methods to the best End: This gives a beautiful Idea. But on the other hand, a Consciousness of Virtue overlooked, neglected, diffressed by Men, and not regarded or rewarded by God, ill-used in this World, without Hope or Prospect of being better used in another, I would fain know, where is the Pleasure of this Reflexion, where is the Beauty III.

DIAL. Beauty of this Scene? Or, how could any Man, in his Senses, think the spreading fuch Notions the way to spread or propagate Virtue in the World? Is it not, I befeech you, an ugly System in which you can suppose no Law and prove no Duty, wherein Men thrive by Wickedness and fuffer by Virtue? Would it not be a difagreeable Sight to fee an honest Man peeled by Sharpers, to see virtuous Men injured and despised while Vice triumphed? An Enthusiast may entertain himself with Visions and fine Talk about such a System; but when it comes to be confidered by Men of cool Heads, and close Reason, I believe they will find no Beauty nor Perfection in it; nor will it appear, that fuch a moral System can possibly come from the fame Hand, or be of a Piece with the natural, throughout which there shines so much Order, Harmony, and Proportion. ALC. Your Discourse serves to confirm me in my Opinion. You may remember, I declared, that touching this Beauty of Morality in the high Sense, a Man's first Thoughts are best; and that, if we pretend to examine, and inspect, and reason, we are in danger to lose Sight of it. That in Fact there is fuch a Thing cannot be doubted, when we confider that in these Days some of our Philosophers have a high high Not Ufei

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high Sense of Virtue, without the least DIAL. Notion of Religion, a clear Proof of the III. Usefulness and Efficacy of our Principles!

XII. CRI. Not to dispute the Virtue of Minute Philosophers, we may venture to call its Cause in question, and make a doubt, whether it be an inexplicable Enthusiastic Notion of Moral Beauty, or rather, as to me it feems, what was already affigned by Euphranor, Complexion, Cuftom, and Religious Education? But, allowing what Beauty you please to Virtue in an Irreligious System, it cannot be less in a Religious, unless you will suppose that her Charms diminish as her Dowry increaseth. The Truth is, a Believer hath all the Motives from the Beauty of Virtue in any Sense whatsoever that an Unbeliever can possibly have, besides other Motives which an Unbeliever hath not. Hence it is plain, that those of your Sect, who have Moral Virtue, owe it not to their peculiar Tenets, which ferve only to lessen the Motives to Virtue. Those therefore, who are good, are less good, and those who are bad are more bad, than they would have been were they Believers. EUPH. To me it feems, those heroic Infidel Inamorato's of abstracted Beauty are much to be pitied, and much to be admired. Lysicles, hearing DIAL hearing this, faid with some Impatience; III. Gentlemen, You shall have my whole Thoughts upon this Point plain and frank. All that is faid about a Moral Sense, or Moral Beauty, in any Signification, either of Alciphron or Euphranor, or any other, I take to be at bottom meer Bubble and Pretence. The xaday and the mperov, the beautiful and the decent, are Things outward, relative, and fuperficial, which have no Effect in the dark, but are specious Topics to discourse and exspatiate upon, as some formal Pretenders of our Sect, though in other Points very Orthodox, are used to do. But should one of them get into Power, you would find him no fuch Fool as Euphranor imagines, He would foon shew he had found out, that the Love of one's Country is a Prejudice: That Mankind are Rogues and Hypocrites, and that it were Folly to facrifice one's felf for the fake of fuch: That all Regards center in this Life, and that, as this Life is to every Man his own Life, it clearly follows that Charity begins at home. Benevolence to Mankind is perhaps pretended, but Benevolence to himself is practised by the Wise. The livelier Sort of our Philosophers do not scruple to own these Maxims; and as for the graver, if they are true to their Principles, one may guess what

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what they must think at the Bottom. DIAL. CRI. Whatever may be the Effect of pure III. Theory upon certain felect Spirits, of a peculiar Make, or in some other Parts of the World; I do verily think that in this Country of ours, Reason, Religion, Law, are all together little enough to fubdue the Outward to the Inner Man; and that it must argue a wrong Head and weak Judgment to suppose, that without them Men will be enamoured of the golden To which my Countrymen perhaps are less inclined than others, there being in the Make of an English Mind a certain Gloom and Eagerness, which carries to the fad Extreme; Religion to Fanaticism; Free-thinking to Atheism; Liberty to Rebellion: Nor should we venture to be governed by Taste, even in Matters of less Consequence. The beautiful in Drefs, Furniture, and Building, is, as Euphranor hath observed, something real and well grounded: And yet our English do not find it out of themselves. What wretched Work do they and other Northern People make, when they follow their own Tafte of Beauty in any of these Particulars, instead of acquiring the true, which is to be got from ancient Models and the Principles of Art, as in the Case of Virtue from great Models and Meditation, so far

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DIAL as natural Means can go? But in no Case III. is it to be hoped, that το καλον will be the leading Idea of the many, who have quick Senses, strong Passions, and gross Intellects.

XIII. ALC. The fewer they are, the more ought we to esteem and admire such Philosophers, whose Souls are touched and transported with this sublime Idea. CRI. But then one might expect from fuch Philosophers, so much good Sense and Philanthropy, as to keep their Tenets to themselves, and consider their weak Brethren, who are more strongly affected by certain Senses and Notions of another Kind, than that of the Beauty of pure difinterested Virtue. Cratylus, a Man prejudiced against the Christian Religion, of a crazy Constitution, of a Rank above most Mens Ambition, and a Fortune equal to his Rank, had little Capacity for fenfual Vices, or Temptation to dishonest ones. Cratylus having talked himself, or imagined that he had talked himfelf, into a Stoical Enthusiasm about the Beauty of Virtue, did, under the Pretence of making Men heroically virtuous, endeavour to destroy the Means of making them reasonably and humanly so: A clear Instance, that neither Birth nor Books nor Conversation can introduce troduc conce own (its ow Lover had a virtuo terefte feems give o Execu the L to obs would fults f all, is lofopl Opin: did n ferve tifed its ov that f as ga totle 3 ters c

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troduce a Knowledge of the World into a DIAL. conceited Mind, which will ever be its own Object, and contemplate Mankind in its own Mirrour! ALC. Cratylus was a Lover of Liberty, and of his Country, and had a mind to make Men incorrupt and virtuous, upon the purest and most difin- x Lee hope of feems just as wise, as if a Monarch should "rrata" at begin give out, that there was neither Jail nor Executioner in his Kingdom to enforce the Laws, but that it would be beautiful to observe them, and that in so doing Men would tafte the pure Delight which refults from Order and Decorum. ALC. After all, is it not true that certain ancient Philosophers, of great Note, held the same Opinion with Cratylus, declaring that he did not come up to the Character, or deferve the Title of a good Man, who practifed Virtue for the fake of any Thing but its own Beauty? CRI. I believe, indeed, that fome of the Ancients faid fuch Things as gave Occasion for this Opinion. Ariftotle * distinguisheth between two Characters of a good Man, the one he calleth ayaθos, or fimply good, the other καλος xayados, from whence the Compound Term καλοκάγαθία, which cannot, perhaps, be rendered by any one Word in our

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Language.

^{*} Ethic. ad Eudemum, lib. 7. cap. ult.

III.

DIAL. Language. But his Sense is plainly this: ayalos hedefineth to be that Man to whom the good Things of Nature are good: For, according to him, those Things, which are vulgarly effeemed the greatest Goods, as Riches, Honours, Power, and Bodily Perfections, are indeed good by Nature, but they happen nevertheless to be hurtful and bad to some Persons, upon the account of evil Habits: Inasmuch as neither a Fool. nor an unjust Man, nor an Intemperate can be at all the better for the Use of them, any more than a fick Man for using the Nourishment proper for those who are in Health. But xalos xayasis is that Man in whom are to be found all Things worthy and decent and laudable, purely as fuch, and for their own fake, and who practifeth Virtue from no other Motive but the fole Love of her own innate Beauty. That Philosopher observes likewise, that there is a certain political Habit, fuch as the Spartans and others had, who thought Virtue was to be valued and practifed on account of the natural Advantages that attend it. For which Reason he adds, They are indeed good Men, but they have not the καλοκάγαθία. or supreme consummate Virtue. From hence it is plain that, according to Aristotle, a Man may be a good Man without believing Virtue its own Reward, or being only moved

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moved to Virtue by the Sense of moral DIAL. Beauty. It is also plain that he distin- III. guisheth the political Virtue of Nations, which the Publick is every where concerned to maintain, from this fublime and speculative Kind. It might also be obferved, that his exalted Idea did confift with supposing a Providence, which inspects and rewards the Virtues of the best Men. For, saith he in another Place*, if the Gods have any Care of Humane Affairs, as it appears they have, it should feem reasonable to suppose, they are most delighted with the most excellent Nature, and most approaching their own, which is the Mind, and that they will reward those who chiefly love and cultivate what is most dear to them. The same Philosopher observes +, that the Bulk of Mankind are not naturally disposed to be awed by Shame, but by Fear: nor to abstain from vicious Practices, on account of their Deformity, but only of the Punishment which attends them. And again ‡, he tells us, that Youth, being of it self averse from Abstinence and Sobriety, should be under the Restraint of Laws regulating their Education and Employment, and that the fame Discipline should be continued even after they became Men. For which, faith

^{*} Ad Nicom. 1. 10. c. 8. + Ibid. c. 9. ‡ Ibid. Vol. I. O he,

DIAL. he, we want Laws, and, in one Word, for III. the whole ordering of Life: inasmuch as the Generality of Mankind obey rather Force than Reason, and are influenced rather by Penalties, than the Beauty of Virtue; ζημίως ἢ τω καλώ. From all which it is very plain, what Aristotle would have thought of those, who should go about to lessen or destroy the Hopes and Fears of Mankind, in order to make them virtuous on this sole Principle of the Beauty of Virtue.

XIV. ALC. But, whatever the Stagirite and his Peripatetics might think, is it not certain the Stoics maintained this Doctrine in its highest Sense, afferting the Beauty of Virtue to be all-fufficient; that Virtue was her own Reward; that this alone could make a Man happy, in spite of all those things which are vulgarly esteemed the greatest Woes and Miseries of Humane Life? And all this they held at the fame time that they believed the Soul of Man to be of a corporeal Nature, and in Death diffipated like a Flame or Vapour. CRI. It must be owned, the Stoics sometimes talk, as if they believed the Mortality of the Soul. Seneca, in a Letter of his to Lucilius, speaks much like a Minute Philosopher, in this Particular. But in feveral other Places, he declares himfelf of a clear

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a clear contrary Opinion, affirming, that DIAL. the Souls of Men after Death mount aloft into the Heavens, look down upon Earth, entertain themselves with the Theory of Cœlestial Bodies, the Course of Nature. and the Conversation of wise and excellent Men, who having lived in distant Ages and Countries upon Earth, make one Society in the other World. It must also be acknowledged, that Marcus Antoninus fometimes speaks of the Soul as perishing or diffolving into its Elementary Parts: But it is to be noted, that he distinguisheth three Principles in the Composition of Humane Nature, the σωμα, Juyn, ves, * Body, Soul, Mind; or as he otherwise expresseth himself, σαρκία, ωνευμάτιον, and ήγεμονικόν, Flesh, Spirit, and governing What he calls the Juxin, or Principle. Soul, containing the brutal Part of our Nature, is indeed represented as a Compound diffoluble, and actually diffolved by Death: But the ves, or to ny suovinov, the Mind or ruling Principle, he held to be of a pure Cœlestial Nature, Αεδυ απόσπασμα a Particle of God, which he fends back intire to the Stars and the Divinity. fides, among all his magnificent Lessons and splendid Sentiments, upon the Force and Beauty of Virtue, he is positive as to

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DIAL. the Being of God, and that not meerly as a plastic Nature, or Soul of the World, but in the strict Sense of a Providence infpecting and taking care of Humane Affairs *. The Stoics therefore, though their Style was high, and often above Truth and Nature, yet, it cannot be faid, that they fo resolved every Motive to a virtuous Life into the fole Beauty of Virtue, as to endeavour to destroy the Belief of the Immortality of the Soul and a diffributive Providence. After all, allowing the difinterested Stoics (therein not unlike our modern Quietists) to have made Virtue its own fole Reward, in the most rigid and absolute Sense, yet what is this to those who are no Stoics? If we adopt the whole Principles of that Sect, admitting their Notions of Good and Evil, their celebrated Apathy, and, in one Word, fetting up for compleat Stoics, we may possibly maintain this Doctrine with a better Grace: at least it will be of a Piece, and confistent with the Whole. But he who shall borrow this splendid Patch from the Stoics, and hope to make a Figure by inferting it in a Piece of modern Composition, seafoned with the Wit and Notions of these Times, will indeed make a Figure, but

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perhaps it may not be in the Eyes of a DIAL, wise Man the Figure he intended. III.

XV. Though it must be owned, the present Age is very indulgent to every thing that aims at profane Raillery; which is alone fufficient to recommend any fantastical Composition to the Public. may behold the Tinsel of a modern Author pass upon this knowing and learned Age for good Writing; affected Strains for Wit; Pedantry for Politeness; Obscurities for Depths; Ramblings for Flights; the most aukward Imitation for original Humour; and all this upon the fole Merit of a little artful Profaneness. ALC. Every one is not alike pleased with Writings of Humour, nor alike capable of them. is the fine Irony of a Man of Quality, 'That certain Reverend Authors, who can condescend to Lay-wit, are nicely ' qualified to hit the Air of Breeding and ' Gentility, and that they will in time, no ' doubt, refine their Manner to the Edifi-' cation of the polite World; who have ' been fo long feduced by the way of Raillery and Wit.' The Truth is, the various Taste of Readers requireth various Kinds of Writers. Our Sect hath provided for this with great Judgment. proselyte the graver fort we have certain O 3 proDIAL. profound Men at Reason and Argument. For the Coffee-houses and Populace, we have Declaimers of a copious Vein. Of fuch a Writer it is no Reproach to fay, fluit lutulentus; he is the fitter for his Readers. Then, for Men of Rank and Politeness, we have the finest and wittiest Railleurs in the World, whose Ridicule is the fure Test of Truth. EUPH. Tell me, Alciphron, are those ingenious Railleurs Men of Knowledge? ALC. Very knowing. EUPH. Do they know, for instance, the Copernican System, or the Circulation of the Blood? ALC. One would think you judged of our Sect, by your Country Neighbours: There is no body in Town but knows all those Points. EUPH. You believe then, Antipodes, Mountains in the Moon, and the Motion of the Earth. ALC. We do. EUPH. Suppose, five or fix Centuries ago, a Man had maintained these Notions among the Beaux Esprits of an English Court; how do you think they would have been received? ALC. With great Ridicule. And now it would be ridiculous to ridicule ALC. It would. EUPH. But Truth was the same then and now. ALC. It was. EUPH. It should seem, therefore, that Ridicule is no fuch fovereign Touchstone and Test of Truth, as you Gentle-

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u 2Gentlemen imagine. ALC. One thing DIAL. we know: Our Raillery and Sarcasms gall the black Tribe, and that is our Comfort. CRI. There is another thing it may be worth your while to know: That Men in a laughing Fit may applaud a Ridicule, which shall appear contemptible when they come to themselves: witness the Ridicule of Socrates by the Comic Poet, the Humour and Reception it met with no more proving that, than the same will yours, to be just, when calmly confidered by Men of Sense. ALC. After all, thus much is certain, our ingenious Men make Converts by deriding the Principles of Religion. And, take my Word, it is the most fuccessful and pleasing Method of Convic-These Authors laugh Men out of their Religion, as Horace did out of their Vices: Admissi circum præcordia ludunt. But a Bigot cannot relish or find out their Wit.

XVI. CRI. Wit, without Wisdom, if there be fuch a thing, is hardly worth finding. And as for the Wisdom of these Men, it is of a Kind so peculiar, one may well suspect it. Cicero was a Man of Sense, and no Bigot, nevertheless he makes Scipio own himself much more vigilant and vigorous in the Race of Virtue, from

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DIAL fupposing Heaven the Prize*. And he introduceth Cato declaring, he would never have undergone those virtuous Toils for the Service of the Public, if he had thought his Being was to end with this Lifet. ALC. I acknowledge Cato, Scipio, and Cicero, were very well for their Times: but you must pardon me, if I do not think they arrived at the high confummate Virtue of our modern Freethinkers. EUPH. It should feem then. that Virtue flourisheth more than ever among us. ALC. It should. EUPH. And this abundant Virtue is owing to the Method taken by your profound Writers to recommend it. ALC. This I grant. EUPH. But you have acknowledged, that the Enthusiastic Lovers of Virtue are not the many of your Sect, but only a few felect Spirits. To which Alciphron making no Answer, Crito addressed himself to Euphranor: To make, faid he, a true Estimate of the Worth and Growth of modern Virtue, you are not to count the virtuous Men, but rather to confider the Quality of their Virtue. Now you must know, the Virtue of these refined Theorists is fomething so pure and genuine, that a very little goes far, and is in truth invaluable. To which that reasonable in-

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terested Virtue, of the old English or Spar-DIAL. tan kind, can bear no Proportion. EUPH. Tell me, Alcipbron, are there not Diseases of the Soul, as well as of the Body? ALC. Without doubt. EUPH. And are not those Diseases, vicious Habits? ALC. They are. EUPH. And, as bodily Distempers are cured by Physic, those of the Mind are cured by Philosophy: are they not? ALC. I acknow-EUPH. It feems, therefore, ledge it. that Philosophy is a Medicine for the Soul ALC. It is. EUPH. How of Man. shall we be able to judge of Medicines, or know which to prefer? Is it not from the Effects wrought by them? ALC. Doubtless. EUPH. Where an Epidemical Distemper rages, suppose a new Physician should condemn the known established Practice, and recommend another Method of Cure: Would you not, in proportion as the Bills of Mortality increased, be tempted to suspect this new Method, notwithstanding all the plausible Discourse of its Abettors? ALC. This ferves only to amuse and lead us from the Question, CRI. It puts me in mind of my Friend Lamprocles, who needed but one Argument against Infidels. I observed, said he, that, as Infidelity grew, there grew Corruption of every kind, and new Vices. This simple ObserIII.

DIAL Observation on Matter of Fact was sufficient to make him, notwithstanding the Remonstrance of several ingenious Men, imbue and feafon the Minds of his Children betimes with the Principles of Religion. The new Theories, which our acute Moderns have endeavoured to substitute in place of Religion, have had their full Course in the present Age, and produced their Effect on the Minds and Manners of That Men are Men, is a fure Maxim: But it is as fure that Englishmen are not the same Men they were: whether better or worse, more or less virtuous, I need not fay. Every one may fee and Though, indeed, after Aristides had been banished, and Socrates put to death at Athens, a Man, without being a Conjurer, might guess what the Beauty of Virtue could do in England. But there is now neither room nor occasion for Guesfing. We have our own Experience to open our Eyes; which yet if we continue to keep shut, till the Remains of religious Education are quite worn off from the Minds of Men; it is to be feared we shall then open them wide, not to avoid, but to behold and lament our Ruin. ALC. Be the Consequences what they will, I can never bring my felf to be of a mind with those, who measure Truth by Convenience. veni I ad follo fion EUEUAL vou Phy my tack to . com EUImuf lutai conc me keep aim Infe my : true. not 1 fifter wife Serv

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But the i venience. Truth is the only Divinity that DIAL. I adore. Wherever Truth leads, I shall III. follow. EUPH. You have then a Paffion for Truth? ALC. Undoubtedly. EUPH. For all Truths? ALC. For all. EUPH. To know, or to publish them? ALC. Both. EUPH. What! would you undeceive a Child that was taking Physic? Would you officiously set an Enemy right, that was making a wrong Attack? Would you help an enraged Man to his Sword? ALC. In fuch Cases, common Sense directs one how to behave. EUPH. Common Sense, it seems then, must be consulted whether a Truth be salutary or hurtful, fit to be declared or concealed. ALC. How! you would have me conceal and stifle the Truth, and keep it to my felf? Is this what you aim at? EUPH. I only make a plain Inference from what you grant. As for my felf, I do not believe your Opinions true. And although you do, you should not therefore, if you would appear confiftent with yourself, think it necessary or wife to publish hurtful Truths. What Service can it do Mankind to lessen the Motives to Virtue, or what Damage to increase them? ALC. None in the World. But I must needs say, I cannot reconcile the received Notions of a God and Providence

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THE MINUTE

DIAL. vidence to my Understanding, and my NaIII. ture abhors the Baseness of conniving at a Falshood. EUPH. Shall we therefore appeal to Truth, and examine the Reasons by which you are withheld from believing these Points? ALC. With all my Heart, but enough for the present. We will make this the Subject of our next Conference.

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THE FOURTH DIALOGUE.

I. Prejudices concerning a Deity. II. Rules laid down by Alciphron to be observed in proving a God. III. What fort of Proof he expects. IV. Whence we collect the Being of other Thinking Individuals. V. The same Method à fortiori proves the Being of God. VI. Alciphron's fecond Thoughts on this Point. VII. God speaks to Men. VIII. How Distance is perceived by Sight. IX. The proper Objects of Sight at no distance. X. Lights, Shades, and Colours, variously combined form a Language. XI. The Signification of this Language learned by Experience. XII. God explaineth himself to the Eyes of Men by the arbitrary Use of sensible XIII. The Prejudice and two-Signs. fold Aspect of a Minute Philosopher. XIV. God present to Mankind, informs, admonishes, and directs them in a sensible manner. XV. Admirable Nature and Use of this visual Language. XVI. Minute Philosophers content to admit a God in certain Senses. XVII. Opinion of Some, who hold that Knowledge and Wisdom

THE MINUTE

DIAL. IV.

dom are not properly in God. XVIII. Dangerous Tendency of this Notion. XIX. Its Original. XX. The Sense of Schoolmen XXI. Scholastic Use of the upon it. Terms Analogy and Analogical explained: Analogical Perfections of God misunderstood. XXII. God intelligent, wife, and good, in the proper Sense of the Words. XXIII. Objection from moral Evil con-XXIV. Men argue from their hdered. own Defects against a Deity. XXV. Religious Worship reasonable and expedient.

ARLY the next Morning, as I looked out of my Window, I faw Alciphron walking in the Garden, with all the Signs of a Man in deep

Thought. Upon which I went down to him. Alciphron, faid I, this early and profound Meditation puts me in no small How fo! Because I should be forry to be convinced there was no God. The Thought of Anarchy in Nature is to me more shocking than in Civil Life: inasmuch as Natural Concerns are more important than Civil, and the Basis of all I grant, replied Alcipbron, that fome Inconvenience may possibly follow from disproving a God: but as to what you fay of Fright and Shocking, all that is nothing thin fran Mir Not tion hatl the an 1 ima and

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thing but Prejudice, meer Prejudice. Men DIAL. frame an Idea or Chimæra in their own IV. Minds, and then fall down and worship it. Notions govern Mankind: but of all Notions, that of God's governing the World hath taken the deepest Root, and spread the farthest: It is therefore in Philosophy an heroical Atchievement to disposses this imaginary Monarch of his Government, and banish all those Fears and Spectres which the Light of Reason alone can dispel;

Non radii solis, non lucida tela diei Discutiunt, sed Naturæ species ratioque*.

My Part, faid I, shall be to stand by, as I have hitherto done, and take Notes of all that passeth during this memorable Event: while a Minute Philosopher not fix Foot high attempts to dethrone the Monarch of the Universe. Alas! replied Alcipbron, Arguments are not to be measured by Feet One Man may fee more than and Inches. a Million: and a short Argument, managed by a Free-thinker, may be fufficient to overthrow the most Gigantic Chimæra. As we were engaged in this Discourse, Crito and Euphranor joined us. I find you have been beforehand with us to day, faid Crito to Alcipbron, and taken the Advantage of Solitude and early Hours, while Euphranor and I were afleep in our Beds.

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^{*} Lucretius.

DIAL. We may therefore expect to see Atheism
IV. placed in the best Light, and supported
by the strongest Arguments.

II. ALC. The Being of a God is a Subject upon which there has been a world of Common-place, which is needless to repeat. Give me leave therefore to lay down certain Rules and Limitations, in order to shorten our present Conference. For as the End of Debating is to perfuade, all those Things which are foreign to this End, should be left out of our Debate. First then, let me tell you, I am not to be perfuaded by Metaphyfical Arguments: fuch for Instance as are drawn from the Idea of an All-perfect Being, or the Abfurdity of an infinite Progression of Cau-This fort of Arguments I have always found dry and jejune: and, as they are not fuited to my way of Thinking, they may perhaps puzzle, but never will convince me. Secondly, I am not to be persuaded by the Authority either of past or present Ages, of Mankind in general, or of particular wife Men: all which paffeth for little or nothing with a Man of found Argument and free Thought. Thirdly, All Proofs drawn from Utility or Convenience are foreign to the Purpose. They may prove indeed the Usefulness of the Notion,

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Notion, but not the Existence of the DIAL. Whatever Legislators or Statesmen may think, Truth and Convenience are very different Things to the rigorous Eyes of a Philosopher. And now, that I may not feem partial, I will limit myfelf also not to object, in the first place, from any thing that may feem irregular or unaccountable in the Works of Nature, against a Cause of infinite Power and Wisdom: because I already know the Anfwer you would make, to wit, That no one can judge of the Symmetry and Use of the Parts of an infinite Machine, which are all relative to each other, and to the whole, without being able to comprehend the intire Machine, or the whole Universe. And in the second place, I shall engage my felf not to object against the Justice and Providence of a Supreme Being, from the Evil that befalls good Men, and the Prosperity which is often the Portion of wicked Men in this Life: because I know that, instead of admitting this to be an Objection against a Deity, you would make it an Argument for a future State; in which there shall be such a Retribution of Rewards and Punishments, as may vindicate the Divine Attributes, and fet all Things right in the End. Now these An-Iwers, though they should be admitted for VOL. I. good

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DIAL.good ones, are in truth no Proofs of the IV. Being of God, but only Solutions of certain Difficulties which might be objected, supposing it already proved by proper Ar-Thus much I thought fit to guments. premise, in order to save Time and Trouble both to you and myself. CRI. I think that, as the proper End of our Conference ought to be supposed the Discovery and Defence of Truth, so Truth may be justified, not only by perfuading its Adversaries, but, where that cannot be done, by shewing them to be unreasonable. Arguments, therefore, which carry Light, have their Effect, even against an Opponent who shuts his Eyes, because they shew him to be obstinate and prejudiced. Befides, this Distinction between Arguments that puzzle and that convince, is least of all observed by Minute Philosophers, and need not therefore be observed by others in their favour. But, perhaps, Euphranor may be willing to encounter you on your own Terms, in which Case I have nothing farther to fay.

> III. EUPH. Alciphron acts like a skilful General, who is bent upon gaining the Advantage of the Ground, and alluring the Enemy out of their Trenches. We, who believe a God, are intrenched within

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Tradition, Custom, Authority, and Law. DIAL. And nevertheless, inftead of attempting to IV. force us, he proposes that we should voluntarily abandon these Intrenchments, and make the Attack: when we may act on the defensive with much Security and Ease, leaving him the Trouble to disposses us of what we need not refign. Reasons (continued he, addressing himself to Alciphron) which you have mustered up in this Morning's Meditation, if they do not weaken, must establish our Belief of a God: for the utmost is to be expected from fo great a Master in his Profession, when he fets his Strength to a Point. ALC. I hold the confused Notion of a Deity, or some invisible Power, to be of all Prejudices the most unconquerable. When half a dozen ingenious Men are got together over a Glass of Wine, by a chearful Fire, in a Room well lighted; we banish with ease all the Spectres of Fancy or Education, and are very clear in our Decisions. But, as I was taking a solitary Walk before it was broad Day-light in yonder Grove, methought the Point was not quite so clear: nor could I readily recollect the Force of those Arguments, which used to appear so conclusive at other times. had I know not what Awe upon my Mind, and feemed haunted by a fort of Panic, which

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hin raDIAL, which I cannot otherwise account for, than by supposing it the Effect of Prejudice: For you must know, that I, like the rest of the World, was once upon a Time catechifed and tutored into the Belief of a God, or Spirit. There is no furer Mark of Prejudice, than the believing a Thing without Reason. What Necessity then can there be that I should set myself the difficult Task of proving a Negative, when it is fufficient to observe, that there is no Proof of the Affirmative, and that the admitting it without Proof is unreafonable? Prove therefore your Opinion, or, if you cannot, you may indeed remain in possession of it, but you will only be possessed of a Prejudice. EUPH. O Alciphron, to content you we must prove, it feems, and we must prove upon your own Terms. But, in the first place, let us fee what fort of Proof you expect. ALC. Perhaps I may not expect it, but I will tell you what fort of Proof I would have: And that is in short, such Proof as every Man of Sense requires of a Matter of Fact, or the Existence of any other particular thing. For Instance, should a Man ask why I believe there is a King of Great Britain? I might answer, Because I had feen him: Or a King of Spain? Because I had seen those who saw him. But

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as for this King of Kings, I neither faw DIAL. him myself, nor any one else that ever did IV. fee him. Surely if there be fuch a thing as God, it is very strange that he should leave himself without a Witness; that Men should still dispute his Being; and that there should be no one evident, senfible, plain Proof of it, without recourse to Philosophy or Metaphysics. A Matter of Fact is not to be proved by Notions, but by Facts. This is clear and full to the Point. You see what I would be at. Upon these Principles I defy Superstition. EUPH. You believe then as far as you can see. ALC. That is my Rule of Faith. EUPH. How! will you not believe the Existence of Things which you hear, unless you also see them? ALC. I will not fay fo neither. When I infifted on Seeing, I would be understood to mean Perceiving in general. Outward Objects make very different Impressions upon the animal Spirits, all which are comprised under the common Name of Sense. And whatever we can perceive by any Sense we may be fure of.

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IV. EUPH. What! do you believe then there are such things as animal Spirits? ALC. Doubtless. EUPH. By what Sense do you perceive them? ALC.

DIAL. I do not perceive them immediately by any of my Senses. I am nevertheless persuaded of their Existence, because I can collect it from their Effects and Operations. They are the Meffengers, which running to and fro in the Nerves, preserve a Communication between the Soul and outward Objects. EUPH. You admit then the Being of a Soul. ALC. Provided I do not admit an immaterial Substance, I see no Inconvenience in admitting there may be fuch a Thing as a Soul. And this may be no more than a thin fine Texture of subtile Parts or Spirits residing in the Brain. EUPH. I do not ask about its Nature. I only ask whether you admit that there is a Principle of Thought and Action, and whether it be perceivable by Sense. ALC. I grant that there is such a Principle, and that it is not the Object of Sense itself, but inferred from Appearances which are perceived by Sense. EUPH. If I understand you rightly, from animal Functions and Motions, you infer the Existence of animal Spirits; and from reasonable Acts, you infer the Existence of a reasonable Soul. Is it not fo? ALC. It is. EUPH. It should seem, therefore, that the Being of Things imperceptible to Sense may be collected from Effects and Signs, or fenfible Tokens. ALC. It may. EUPH. Tell

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Tell me, Alciphron, is not the Soul that DIAL. which makes the principal Distinction between a real Person and a Shadow, a living Man and a Carcase? ALC. I grant it is. EUPH. I cannot, therefore, know that you for Instance are a distinct thinking Individual, or a living real Man, by furer or other Signs, than those from which it can be inferred that you have a Soul. ALC. You cannot. EUPH. Pray tell me, are not all Acts immediately and properly perceived by Sense reducible to Motion? ALC. They are. EUPH. From Motions therefore you infer a Mover, or Cause: and from reasonable Motions (or fuch as appear calculated for a reasonable End) a rational Cause, Soul, or Spirit. ALC. Even fo.

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V. EUPH. The Soul of Man actuates but a small Body, an insignificant Particle, in respect of the great Masses of Nature, the Elements, and heavenly Bodies, and System of the World. And the Wisdom that appears in those Motions, which are the Essect of Humane Reason, is incomparably less than that which discovers it self, in the Structure and Use of organized natural Bodies, Animal or Vegetable. A Man with his Hand can make no Machine so admirable as the Hand it P 4

DIAL. felf: Nor can any of those Motions, by IV. which we trace out Humane Reason, approach the Skill and Contrivance of those wonderful Motions of the Heart and Brain and other vital Parts, which do not depend on the Will of Man. ALC. All this is true. EUPH. Doth it not follow then, that from natural Motions, independent of Man's Will, may be inferred both Power and Wisdom incomparably greater than that of the Humane Soul? ALC. It should seem so. EUPH. Further, is there not in natural Productions and Effects a visible Unity of Counfel and Defign? Are not the Rules fixed and immoveable? Do not the same Laws of Motion obtain throughout? The same in China and here, the same two thoufand Years ago, and at this Day? ALC. All this I do not deny. EUPH. Is there not also a Connexion or Relation between Animals and Vegetables; between both, and the Elements; between the Elements, and heavenly Bodies; so that from their mutual Respects, Influences, Subordinations, and Uses, they may be collected to be Parts of one Whole, conspiring to one and the same End, and fulfilling the same Defign? ALC. Supposing all this to be true. EUPH. Will it not then follow, that this vastly great or infinite Power and

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and Wisdom must be supposed in one DIAL. and the fame Agent, Spirit, or Mind; and that we have, at least, as clear, full, and immediate Certainty of the Being of this infinitely wife and powerful Spirit, as of any one Humane Soul whatfoever besides our own? ALC. Let me consider: I sufpect we proceed too haftily. What! Do you pretend you can have the fame Affurance of the Being of God, that you can have of mine whom you actually fee stand before you and talk to you? EUPH. The very fame, if not greater. ALC. How do you make this appear? EUPH. By the Person Alcipbron is meant an individual thinking Thing, and not the Hair, Skin, or visible Surface, or any Part of the outward Form, Colour, or Shape of Alcipbron. ALC. This I grant. EUPH. And in granting this, you grant that, in a strict Sense, I do not see Alciphron, i.e. that individual thinking Thing, but only fuch visible Signs and Tokens, as suggest and infer the Being of that invisible thinking Principle or Soul. Even fo, in the felf same manner it feems to me, that though I cannot with Eyes of Flesh behold the invisible God; yet I do in the strictest Sense behold and perceive by all my Senfes fuch Signs and Tokens, fuch Effects and Operations, as fuggest, indicate,

DIAL indicate, and demonstrate an invisible IV. God, as certainly and with the same Evidence, at least, as any other Signs, perceived by Sense, do suggest to me the Existence of your Soul, Spirit, or thinking Principle; which I am convinced of only by a few Signs or Effects, and the Motions of one small organized Body: Whereas I do at all Times and in all Places. perceive fenfible Signs, which evince the Being of God. The Point, therefore, doubted or denied by you at the beginning now feems manifestly to follow from the Premises. Throughout this whole Inquiry, have we not confidered every Step with Care, and made not the least Advance without clear Evidence? You and I examined and affented fingly to each foregoing Proposition: What shall we do then with the Conclusion? For my part, if you do not help me out, I find my felf under an absolute Necessity of admitting it for true. You must therefore be content, henceforward to bear the Blame, if I live and die in the Belief of a God.

> VI. ALC. It must be confest, I do not readily find an Answer. There seems to be some Foundation for what you say. But on the other hand, if the Point was so clear as you pretend, I cannot conceive how

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how fo many fagacious Men of our Sect DIAL. should be so much in the dark, as not to IV. know or believe one Syllable of it. EUPH. O Alciphron, it is not our present Business to account for the Overfights, or vindicate the Honour of those great Men the Free-thinkers, when their very Existence is in danger of being called in question. ALC. How fo? EUPH. Be pleased to recollect the Concessions you have made, and then shew me, if the Arguments for a Deity be not conclusive, by what better Argument you can prove the Existence of that thinking Thing, which in strictness constitutes the Free-thinker. As soon as Euphranor had uttered these Words, Alciphron stopt short and stood in a Posture of Meditation, while the rest of us continued our Walk and took two or three Turns, after which he joined us again with a fmiling Countenance, like one who had made fome Discovery. I have found, faid he, what may clear up the Point in dispute, and give Euphranor intire Satisfaction; I would fay an Argument which will prove the Existence of a Free-thinker, the like whereof cannot be applied to prove the Existence of a God. You must know then, that your Notion of our perceiving the Existence of God, as certainly and immediately as we do that

DIAL that of a Humane Person, I could by no Means digest, though I must own it puzzled me, till I had considered the Matter. At first methought, a particular Structure, Shape, or Motion was the most certain Proof of a thinking, reasonable Soul. But a little Attention satisfied me, that these Things have no necessary Connexion with Reason, Knowledge, and Wisdom. And that allowing them to be certain Proofs of a living Soul, they cannot be so of a thinking and reasonable one. Upon second Thoughts, therefore, and a minute Examination of this Point, I have found that nothing so much convinces me of the Existence of another Person as his speaking to It is my hearing you talk that, in strict and philosophical Truth, is to me the best Argument for your Being. And this is a peculiar Argument inapplicable to your Purpose: For you will not, I suppose, pretend that God speaks to Man in the same clear and fenfible manner, as one Man doth to another.

VII. EUPH. How! is then the Impression of Sound so much more evident than that of other Senses? Or, if it be, is the Voice of Man louder than that of

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Thunder? ALC. Alas! You mistake the DIAL. Point. What I mean is not the Sound of IV. Speech meerly as fuch, but the arbitrary Use of sensible Signs, which have no Similitude or necessary Connexion with the Things fignified; so as by the apposite Management of them, to fuggest and exhibite to my Mind an endless Variety of Things, differing in Nature, Time, and Place: thereby informing me, entertaining me, and directing me how to act, not only with regard to Things near and present, but also, with regard to Things distant and future. No matter, whether these Signs are pronounced or written, whether they enter by the Eye or the Ear: They have the same Use, and are equally Proofs of an intelligent, thinking, defigning Cause. EUPH. But what if it should appear that God really speaks to Man; would this content you? ALC. I am for admitting no inward Speech, no holy Instincts, or Suggestions of Light or Spirit. All that, you must know, passeth with Men of Sense for nothing. If you do not make it plain to me, that God speaks to Men by outward fenfible Signs, of fuch fort and in fuch manner, as I have defined, you do nothing. EUPH. But if it shall appear plainly, that God speaks to Men, by the Intervention and Use of arbitrary, outward.

DIAL ward, sensible Signs, having no Resem-IV. blance or necessary Connexion with the Things they stand for and suggest: If it shall appear, that by innumerable Combinations of these Signs, an endless Variety of Things is discovered and made known to us; and that we are thereby instructed or informed in their different Natures; that we are taught and admonished what to shun, and what to purfue; and are directed how to regulate our Motions, and how to act with respect to Things distant from us, as well in Time as Place; will this content you? ALC. It is the very Thing I would have you make out; for therein confifts the Force and Use and Nature of Language.

VIII. EUPH. Look, Alcipbron, do you not see the Castle upon yonder Hill? ALC. I do. EUPH. Is it not at a great Distance from you? ALC. It is. EUPH. Tell me, Alcipbron, is not Distance a Line turned End-wise to the Eye? ALC. Doubtless. EUPH. And can a Line, in that Situation, project more than one single Point on the Bottom of the Eye? ALC. It cannot. EUPH. Therefore the Appearance of a long and of a short Distance is of the same Magnitude, or rather of no Magnitude at all, being in all Cases

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one fingle Point. ALC. It feems fo. DIAL. EUPH. Should it not follow from hence IV. that Distance is not immediately perceived by the Eye? ALC. It should, EUPH. Must it not then be perceived by the Mediation of some other Thing? ALC. It must. EUPH. To discover what this is. let us examine what Alteration there may be in the Appearance of the fame Object, placed at different Distances from the Eye. Now I find by Experience that, when an Object is removed still farther and farther off in a direct Line from the Eye, its vifible Appearance still grows leffer and fainter: And this Change of Appearance, being proportional and universal, seems to me to be that by which we apprehend the various Degrees of Distance. ALC. I have nothing to object to this. EUPH. But Littleness or Faintness, in their own Nature, feem to have no necessary Connexion with greater Length of Distance. ALC. I admit this to be true. EUPH. Will it not follow then, that they could never fuggest it but from Experience? ALC. It will. EUPH. That is to fay, we perceive Distance, not immediately, but by Mediation of a Sign, which hath no Likeness to it, or necessary Connexion with it, but only fuggests it from repeated Experience, as Words do Things. ALC. Hold,

DIAL. Hold, Euphranor: Now I think of it, the Writers in Optics tell us of an Angle made by the two Optic Axes, where they meet in the visible Point or Object; which Angle, the obtuser it is the nearer it shews the Object to be, and by how much the acuter by fo much the farther off; and this from a necessary demonstrable Connexion. EUPH. The Mind then finds out the Distance of Things by Geometry. ALC. It doth. EUPH. Should it not follow, therefore, that no body could fee but those who had learned Geometry, and knew fomething of Lines and Angles? ALC. There is a fort of natural Geometry, which is got without Learning. EUPH. Pray inform me, Alciphron, in order to frame a Proof of any Kind, or deduce one Point from another, is it not necessary, that I perceive the Connexion of the Terms in the Premises, and the Connexion of the Premises with the Conclusion: And, in general, to know one Thing by means of another, must I not first know that other Thing? when I perceive your Meaning by your Words, must I not first perceive the Words themselves? and must I not know the Premises before I infer the Conclusion? ALC. All this is true. EUPH. Whoever, therefore, collects a nearer Distance from a wider Angle,

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or a farther Distance from an acuter Angle, DIAL, must first perceive the Angles themselves. And he who doth not perceive those Angles, can infer nothing from them. Is it so or not? ALC. It is as you fay. EUPH. Ask now the first Man you meet, whether he perceives or knows any Thing of those Optic Angles? Or whether he ever thinks about them, or makes any Inferences from them, either by natural or artificial Geometry? What Answer do you think he would make? ALC. To speak the Truth, I believe his Answer would be, that he knew nothing of those Matters. EUPH. It cannot therefore be, that Men judge of Distance by Angles: Nor consequently can there be any Force in the Argument you drew from thence, to prove that Diftance is perceived by means of fomething which hath a necessary Connexion with it. ALC. I agree with you.

IX. EUPH. To me it seems, that a Man may know whether he perceives a Thing or no: and if he perceives it, whether it be immediately or mediately: and if mediately, whether by means of something like or unlike, necessarily or arbitrarily connected with it. ALC. It seems so. EUPH. And is it not certain, that Distance is perceived only by Experience, if it be Vol. I. Q neither

DIAL neither perceived immediately by itself, nor by Means of any Image, nor of any Lines and Angles, which are like it, or have a necessary Connexion with it? ALC. It is, EUPH. Doth it not feem to follow from what hath been faid and allowed by you, that before all Experience a Man would not imagine, the Things he faw were at any Distance from him? ALC. How! let me see. EUPH. The Littleness or Faintness of Appearance, or any other Idea or Senfation, not necessarily connected with, or refembling Distance, can no more suggest different Degrees of Distance, or any Distance at all, to the Mind, which hath not experienced a Connexion of the things fignifying and fignified, than Words can fuggest Notions before a Man hath learned the Language. ALC. I allow this to be true. EUPH. Will it not thence follow. that a Man born blind, and made to fee, would, upon first receiving his Sight, take the things he faw, not to be at any Distance from him, but in his Eye, or rather in his Mind? ALC. I must own it seems so: And yet, on the other hand, I can hardly perfuade my felf, that, if I were in fuch a State, I should think those Objects, which I now fee at fo great Distance, to be at no Distance at all. EUPH. It seems then,

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are at a Distance from you. ALC. Doubt-DIAL. less I do. Can any one question but yonder Castle is at a great Distance? EUPH. Tell me, Alciphron, can you discern the Doors, Windows, and Battlements of that fame Castle? ALC. I cannot. At this Diftance it feems only a fmall round Tower. EUPH. But I, who have been at it, know that it is no small round Tower, but a large square Building with Battlements and Turrets, which it feems you do not ALC. What will you infer from thence? EUPH. I would infer, that the very Object, which you strictly and properly perceive by Sight, is not that Thing which is feveral Miles distant. ALC. Why fo? EUPH. Because a little round Object is one Thing, and a great square Object is another. Is it not? ALC. I cannot deny it. EUPH. Tell me, is not the visible Appearance alone the proper Object of Sight? ALC. It is. What think you now, (faid Euphranor pointing towards the Heavens) of the visible Appearance of yonder Planet? Is it not a round luminous Flat, no bigger than a Sixpence? ALC. What then? EUPH. Tell me then, what you think of the Planet itself. Do you not conceive it to be a vast Opaque Globe, with feveral unequal Rifings and Vallies? ALC. I do. EUPH. How can you

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IV. Object of your Sight exists at a Distance?

ALC. I confess I know not. EUPH. For your farther Conviction, do but consider that crimson Cloud. Think you that if you were in the very Place where it is, you would perceive any Thing like what you now see? ALC. By no means. I should perceive only a dark Mist. EUPH. Is it not plain, therefore, that neither the Castle, the Planet, nor the Cloud, which you see here, are those real ones which you suppose exist at a Distance?

X. ALC. What am I to think then? Do we see any thing at all, or is it altogether Fancy and Illusion? EUPH. Upon the whole, it seems the proper Objects of Sight are Light and Colours, with their feveral Shades and Degrees; all which, being infinitely diversified and combined, form a Language wonderfully adapted to fuggest and exhibit to us the Distances, Figures, Situations, Dimensions, and various Qualities of tangible Objects: not by Similitude, nor yet by Inference of necessary Connexion, but by the arbitrary Imposition of Providence: just as Words fuggest the Things signified by them. ALC. How! Do we not, strictly speaking, perceive by Sight fuch Things as Trees,

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Trees, Houses, Men, Rivers, and the DIAL. like? EUPH. We do, indeed, perceive IV. or apprehend those Things by the Faculty of Sight. But will it follow from thence, that they are the proper and immediate Objects of Sight, any more than that all those Things are the proper and immediate Objects of Hearing, which are fignified by the Help of Words or Sounds? ALC. You would have us think then, that Light, Shades, and Colours, varioully combined, answer to the several Articulations of Sound in Language: and that, by means thereof, all Sorts of Objects are suggested to the Mind through the Eye, in the fame Manner as they are fuggested by Words or Sounds through the Ear: that is, neither from necessary Deduction to the Judgment, nor from Similitude to the Fancy, but purely and folely from Experience, Custom, and Habit. EUPH. I would not have you think any Thing, more than the Nature of Things obligeth you to think, nor fubmit in the least to my Judgment, but only to the Force of Truth: which is an Imposition that I suppose the freest Thinkers will not pretend to be exempt from. ALC. You have led me, it feems, Step by Step, till I am got I know not where. But I shall try to get out again, if not

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IV. of my own finding. Here Alciphron, having made a short Pause, proceeded as follows.

XI. Answer me, Euphranor, should it not follow fom these Principles, that a Man born blind, and made to fee, would at first Sight, not only not perceive their Distance, but also not so much as know the very Things themselves which he saw, for Instance, Men or Trees? which furely to suppose must be absurd. EUPH. I grant, in consequence of those Principles, which both you and I have admitted, that fuch a one would never think of Men, Trees, or any other Objects that he had been accustomed to perceive by Touch, upon having his Mind filled with new Senfations of Light and Colours, whose various Combinations he doth not yet understand, or know the Meaning of; no more than a Chinese, upon first hearing the Words Man and Tree, would think of the Things fignified by them. In both Cases, there must be Time and Experience, by repeated Acts, to acquire a Habit of knowing the Connexion between the Signs and Things fignified; that is to fay, of understanding the Language, whether of the Eyes or of the Ears. And I conceive no Absurdity in

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in all all this ALC. I fee, therefore, in ftrict DIAL. Philosophical Truth, that Rock only in IV. the same Sense that I may be said to hear it, when the Word Rock is pronounced. EUPH. In the very fame. ALC. How comes it to pass then, that every one shall fay he sees, for Instance, a Rock or a House, when those Things are before his Eyes; but no body will fay he hears a Rock or a House, but only the Words or Sounds themselves, by which those things are faid to be fignified or fuggested, but not heard? Besides, if Vision be only a Language speaking to the Eyes, it may be asked; When did Men learn this Language? To acquire the Knowledge of fo many Signs, as go to the making up a Language, is a Work of some Difficulty. But will any Man fay he hath spent Time or been at Pains, to learn this Language of Vision? EUPH. No Wonder, we cannot affign a Time beyond our remotest Memory. If we have been all practifing this Language, ever fince our first Entrance into the World: If the Author of Nature constantly speaks to the Eyes of all Mankind, even in their earliest Infancy, whenever the Eyes are open in the Light, whether alone or in Company: It doth not feem to me at all strange, that Men should not be aware they had ever learned Q4 a Lan-

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DIAL.a Language, begun fo early, and practifed fo constantly, as this of Vision. And, if we also consider that it is the same throughout the whole World, and not, like other Languages, differing in different Places: it will not feem unaccountable, that Men should mistake the Connexion between the proper Objects of Sight and the Things fignified by them, to be found-in necessary Relation, or Likeness: Or, that they should even take them for the same things. Hence it feems eafy to conceive, why Men, who do not think, should confound in this Language of Vision the Signs with the Things fignified, otherwise than they are wont to do, in the various particular Languages formed by the several Nations

> XII. It may be also worth while to obferve, that Signs being little confidered in themselves, or for their own sake, but only in their relative Capacity, and for the fake of those things whereof they are Signs, it comes to pass, that the Mind often overlooks them, so as to carry its Attention immediately on to the Things Thus, for example, in reading we run over the Characters with the flightest regard, and pass on to the mean-Hence it is frequent for Men to fay, they

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of Men.

they fee Words, and Notions, and Things, DIAL. in reading of a Book: whereas in Strict- IV. ness, they see only the Characters, which fuggest Words, Notions, and Things. And by parity of Reason, may we not suppose, that Men, not resting in, but overlooking the immediate and proper Objects of Sight, as in their own Nature of small moment, carry their Attention onward to the very Things fignified, and talk as if they faw the secondary Objects? which, in Truth and Strictness, are not feen, but only fuggested and apprehended by means of the proper Objects of Sight, which alone are feen. ALC. To speak my Mind freely, this Differtation grows tedious, and runs into Points too dry and minute for a Gentleman's Attention. I thought, faid Crito, we had been told, the Minute Philosophers loved to consider things closely and minutely. ALC. That is true, but in so polite an Age, who would be a meer Philosopher? There is a certain Scholastic Accuracy which ill suits the Freedom and Ease of a well-bred Man. But, to cut short this Chicane, I propound it fairly to your own Conscience, whether you really think that God himself speaks every Day and in every Place to the Eyes of all Men? EUPH. That is really and in truth my Opinion: and it should be yours

DIAL. yours too, if you are confistent with your felf, and abide by your own Definition of Language. Since you cannot deny, that the Great Mover and Author of Nature constantly explaineth himself to the Eyes of Men by the fensible Intervention of arbitrary Signs, which have no Similitude or Connexion with the Things fignified; fo as by compounding and disposing them, to fuggest and exhibit an endless Variety of Objects, differing in Nature, Time, and Place, thereby informing and directing Men how to act with respect to things distant and future, as well as near and present. In consequence, I say, of your own Sentiments and Concessions, you have as much reason to think, the univerfal Agent or God speaks to your Eyes, as you can have for thinking any particular Person speaks to your Ears. ALC. I cannot help thinking, that some Fallacy runs throughout this whole Ratiocination, though perhaps I may not readily point it out. Hold! let me see! In Language the Signs are arbitrary, are they not? EUPH. They are. ALC. And consequently, they do not always suggest real Matters of Fact. Whereas this natural Language, as you call it, or these visible Signs, do always fuggest Things in the same uniform way, and have the fame constant regular Connexion nex sho and predo You a P are it. Opion

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onion nexion with Matters of Fact: whence it DIAL. should seem, the Connexion was necessary, IV. and therefore, according to the Definition premised, it can be no Language. How do you solve this Objection? EUPH. You may solve it your self, by the help of a Picture or Looking-glass. ALC. You are in the right, I see there is nothing in it. I know not what else to say to this Opinion more, than that it is so odd and contrary to my way of thinking, that I shall never assent to it.

XIII. EUPH. Be pleased to recollect your own Lectures upon Prejudice, and apply them in the present Case. Perhaps they may help you to follow where Reafon leads, and to suspect Notions which are strongly riveted, without having been ever examined. ALC. I disdain the Suspicion of Prejudice. And I do not speak only for my felf. I know a Club of most ingenious Men, the freest from Prejudice of any Men alive, who abhor the Notion of a God, and I doubt not would be very able to untie this Knot. Upon which Words of Alciphron, I, who had acted the Part of an indifferent Stander-by, obferved to him: That it misbecame his Character and repeated Professions, to own an Attachment to the Judgment, or build upon DIAL. upon the prefumed Abilities of other Men. IV. how ingenious soever: and that this Proceeding might encourage his Adversaries to have recourse to Authority, in which perhaps they would find their Account more than he. Oh! said Crito, I have often observed the Conduct of Minute Philosophers. When one of them has got a Ring of Disciples round him, his Method is to exclaim against Prejudice, and recommend Thinking and Reasoning, giving to understand that himself is a Man of deep Researches and close Argument, one who examines impartially, and concludes warily. The fame Man in other Company, if he chance to be pressed with Reason, shall laugh at Logic, and assume the lazy supine Airs of a fine Gentleman, a Wit, a Railleur, to avoid the Dryness of a regular and exact Inquiry. This double Face of the Minute Philosopher is of no fmall Use to propagate and maintain his Notions. Though to me it feems a plain Case, that if a fine Gentleman will shake off Authority, and appeal from Religion to Reason, unto Reason he must go: And if he cannot go without Leading-Strings, furely he had better be led by the Authority of the Public, than by that of any Knot of Minute Philosophers. ALC. Gentlemen, this Discourse is very irksome and

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and needless. For my part, I am a Friend DIAL. to Inquiry. I am willing Reason should IV. have its full and free Scope. I build on no Man's Authority. For my part, I have no Interest in denying a God. Any Man may believe or not believe a God, as he pleases, for me. But after all, Euphranor must allow me to stare a little at his Conclusions. EUPH. The Conclusions are yours as much as mine, for you were led to them by your own Concessions.

XIV. You it feems stare to find, that God is not far from every one of us; and that in him we live, and move, and have our Being. You, who in the beginning of this Morning's Conference, thought it strange, that God should leave himself without a Witness, do now think it strange the Witness should be so full and clear. ALC. I must own I do. I was aware, indeed, of a certain Metaphyfical Hypothesis, of our seeing all things in God by the Union of the Humane Soul with the intelligible Substance of the Deity, which neither I, nor any one else could make Sense of. But I never imagined it could be pretended, that we faw God with our fleshly Eyes, as plain as we see any Humane Person whatsoever, and that he daily speaks to our Senses in a manifest and clear

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DIAL. clear Dialect. CRI. As for that Metaphyfical Hypothesis, I can make no more of it than you. But I think it plain, This optic Language hath a necessary Connexion with Knowledge, Wisdom, and Goodness. It is equivalent to a conftant Creation, betokening an immediate Act of Power and Providence. It cannot be accounted for by mechanical Principles, by Atoms, Attractions, or Effluvia. The instantaneous Production and Reproduction of fo many Signs combined, diffolved, transposed, diversified, and adapted to such an endless variety of Purposes, ever shifting with the Occasions, and suited to them, being utterly inexplicable and unaccountable by the Laws of Motion, by Chance, by Fate, or the like blind Principles, doth fet forth and testify the immediate Operation of a Spirit or thinking Being: and not meerly of a Spirit, which every Motion or Gravitation may possibly infer, but of one wise, good, and provident Spirit, who directs, and rules, and governs the World. Philosophers, being convinced of the Wisdom and Power of the Creator, from the Make and Contrivance of organized Bodies, and orderly System of the World,

did nevertheless imagine, that he left this

System, with all its Parts and Contents well adjusted and put in motion, as an

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Artist leaves a Clock, to go thenceforward DIAL. of it self for a certain Period. But this IV. visual Language proves, not a Creator meerly, but a provident Governor actually and intimately present and attentive to all our Interests and Motions: who watches over our Conduct, and takes care of our minutest Actions and Designs, throughout the whole course of our Lives, informing, admonishing, and directing incessantly, in a most evident and sensible manner. This is truly wonderful. EUPH. And is it not so, that Men should be encompassed by such a Wonder, without reslecting on it?

XV. Something there is of Divine and Admirable in this Language, addressed to our Eyes, that may well awaken the Mind, and deserve its utmost Attention: it is learned with so little Pains: it expresseth the Differences of Things fo clearly and aptly: it instructs with such Facility and Dispatch, by one Glance of the Eye conveying a greater Variety of Advices, and a more distinct Knowledge of Things, than could be got by a Discourse of several And, while it informs, it amuses and entertains the Mind with fuch fingular Pleasure and Delight. It is of such excellent Use in giving a Stability and Permanency to Humane Discourse, in recording Sounds DIAL. Sounds and bestowing Life on dead Languages, enabling us to converse with Men of remote Ages and Countries. And it answers so apposite to the Uses and Necesfities of Mankind, informing us more distinctly of those Objects, whose Nearness and Magnitude qualify them to be of greatest Detriment or Benefit to our Bodies, and less exactly, in proportion as their Littleness or Distance make them of less Concern to us. ALC. And yet these strange Things affect Men but little. EUPH. But they are not strange, they are familiar,

and that makes them be overlooked. Things which rarely happen strike; whereas Frequency lessens the Admiration of Things, though in themselves ever so admirable. Hence a common Man, who is not used to think and make Reflexions, would probably be more convinced of the Being of a God, by one fingle Sentence

heard once in his Life from the Sky, than by all the Experience he has had of this vifual Language, contrived with fuch exquisite Skill, so constantly addressed to

his Eyes, and so plainly declaring the Nearness, Wisdom, and Providence of him with whom we have to do. ALC. After

all, I cannot fatisfy my felf, how Men

should be so little surprised or amazed about this visive Faculty, if it was really of

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a Nature fo furprifing and amazing. DIAL EUPH. But let us suppose a Nation IV. of Men blind from their Infancy, among whom a Stranger arrives, the only Man who can fee in all the Country: Let us suppose this Stranger travelling with some of the Natives, and that one while he foretells to them, that, in case they walkstraight forward, in half an Hour they shall meet Men, or Cattle, or come to a House: that if they turn to the right, and proceed, they shall in a few Minutes be in danger of falling down a Precipice: that shaping their course to the left, they will in fuch a time arrive at a River, a Wood, or a Mountain. What think you? Must they not be infinitely furprised, that one, who had never been in their Country before, should know it so much better than them-And would not those Predictions feem to them as unaccountable and incredible, as Prophefy to a Minute Philosopher? ALC. I cannot deny it. EUPH. But it feems to require intense Thought, to be able to unravel a Prejudice that has been fo long forming, to get over the vulgar Error of Ideas common to both Senses, and so to distinguish between the Objects of Sight R

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y of ture DIAL and Touch*, which have grown (if I may fo fay) blended together in our Fancy, as to be able to suppose our selves exactly in the State, that one of those Men would be in, if he were made to fee. And yet this I believe is possible, and might seem worth the pains of a little Thinking, efpecially to those Men whose proper Employment and Profession it is to think, and unravel Prejudices, and confute Mistakes, I frankly own I cannot find my way out of this Maze, and should gladly be set right by those who see better than my felf. CRI. The pursuing this Subject in their own Thoughts would possibly open a new Scene to those speculative Gentlemen of the Minute Philosophy. puts me in mind of a Passage in the Psalmist, where he represents God to be covered with Light as with a Garment, and would methinks be no ill Comment on that ancient Notion of some Eastern Sages: That God had Light for his Body, and Truth for his Soul. This Con-

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^{*} See the annexed Treatife, wherein this Point and the whole Theory of Vision are more fully explained: The Paradoxes of which Theory, though at first received with great Ridicule, by those who think Ridicule the Test of Truth, were many Years after surprisingly consirmed, by a Case of a Person made to see, who had been blind from his Birth. See Philos. Transact. Num. 402.

versation lasted till a Servant came to tell DIAL. us the Tea was ready: Upon which we IV. walked in, and found Lysicles at the Teatable.

XVI. As foon as we fate down, I am glad, faid Alciphron, that I have here found my Second, a fresh Man to maintain our common Cause, which, I doubt, Lysicles will think hath suffered by his Absence. LYS. Why so? ALC. I have been drawn into some Concessions you won't like. LYS. Let me know what they are. ALC. Why, that there is fuch a thing as a God, and that his Existence is very certain. LYS. Bless me! How came you to entertain fo wild a Notion? ALC. You know we profess to follow Reason wherever it leads. And in short I have been reasoned into it. LYS. Reafoned! You should say amused with Words, bewildered with Sophistry. EUPH. Have you a mind to hear the fame Reafoning that led Alciphron and me Step by Step, that we may examine whether it be Sophistry or no? LYS. As to that, I am very eafy. I guess all that can be faid on that Head. It shall be my Business to help my Friend out, whatever Arguments drew him in. EUPH. Will you admit the Premises, and deny the Conclu-R2

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LYS. What if I admit the Con-DIAL.fions? clusion? EUPH. How! will you grant there is a God? LYS. Perhaps I may. EUPH. Then we are agreed. Perhaps not. EUPH. O Lysicles! you are a fubtle Adversary. I know not what you would be at. LYS. You must know then, that at bottom the Being of God is a Point in it felf of small consequence, and a Man may make this Concession without yielding much. The great Point is, what Sense the Word God is to be taken in. The very Epicureans allowed the Being of Gods: but then they were indolent Gods, unconcerned with Humane Affairs. Hobbes allowed a corporeal God: and Spinosa held the Universe to be God. And yet no body doubts they were stanch Free-thinkers. I could wish indeed the Word God were quite omitted, because in most Minds it is coupled with a fort of fuperstitious Awe, the very Root of all I shall not, nevertheless, be Religion. much disturbed, though the Name be retained, and the Being of God allowed in any Sense, but in that of a Mind: which knows all things, and beholds Humane Actions, like fome Judge or Magistrate, with infinite Observation and Intelligence. The Belief of a God in this Sense fills a Man's Mind with Scruples, lays him under

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der Constraints, and imbitters his very Be-DIAL. ing: But in another Sense, it may be at-IV. tended with no great ill Consequence. This I know was the Opinion of our great Diagoras, who told me he would never have been at the pains to find out a Demonstration that there was no God, if the received Notion of God had been the same with that of some Fathers and Schoolmen. EUPH. Pray what was that?

XVII. LYS. You must know, Diagoras, a Man of much Reading and Inquiry, had discovered, that once upon a time the most profound and speculative Divines finding it impossible to reconcile the Attributes of God, taken in the common Sense, or in any known Sense, with Humane Reason, and the Appearances of things, taught that the Words Knowledge, Wisdom, Goodness, and such like, when spoken of the Deity, must be understood in a quite different Sense, from what they fignify in the vulgar Acceptation, or from any thing that we can form a Notion of, or Hence, whatever Objections conceive. might be made against the Attributes of God they eafily folved, by denying those Attributes belonged to God, in this or that, or any known particular Sense or Notion: which was the same thing as to deny they belonged

IV. the Attributes of God, they in effect denying ny'd his Being, though perhaps they were

ny'd his Being, though perhaps they were not aware of it. Suppose, for instance, a Man should object that future Contingencies were inconsistent with the Foreknowledge of God, because it is repugnant that certain Knowledge should be of an uncertain thing: it was a ready and an eafy Anfwer to fay, that this may be true, with respect to Knowledge taken in the common Sense, or in any Sense that we can posfibly form any Notion of: but that there would not appear the same Inconsistency, between the contingent Nature of Things and Divine Foreknowledge, taken to fignify fomewhat that we know nothing of, which in God supplies the place of what we understand by Knowledge; which it differs not in Quantity or Degree of Perfection, but altogether, and in kind, as Light doth from Sound; and even more, fince these agree in that they are both Sensations: whereas Knowledge in God hath no fort of Resemblance or Agreement with any Notion, that Man can frame of Knowledge. The like may be faid of all the other Attributes, which indeed may by this means be equally reconciled with every thing, or with nothing. But all Men who think must needs fee,

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them. For how are things reconciled IV. with the Divine Attributes, when these Attributes themselves are in every intelligible Sense denied; and consequently the very Notion of God taken away, and nothing left but the Name, without any Meaning annexed to it? In short, the Belief that there is an unknown Subject of Attributes absolutely unknown, is a very innocent Doctrine: which the acute Diagoras well saw, and was therefore wonderfully delighted with this System.

XVIII. For, faid he, if this could once make its way, and obtain in the World, there would be an end of all natural or rational Religion, which is the Basis both of the Jewish and the Christian: for he who comes to God, or enters himself in the Church of God, must first believe that there is a God, in some intelligible Sense: and not only that there is something in general without any proper Notion, though never fo inadequate, of any of its Qualities or Attributes: for this may be Fate, or Chaos, or Plastic Nature, or any thing else as well as God. Nor will it avail to fay, there is fomething in this unknown Being analogous to Knowledge and Goodness: that is to iay,

DIAL. fay, which produceth those Effects, which IV. we could not conceive to be produced by Men in any Degree, without Knowledge and Goodness. For this is in Fact to give up the Point in dispute between Theists and Atheists, the Question having always been, not whether there was a Principle, (which Point was allowed by all Philosophers as well before as fince Anaxagoras) but whether this Principle was a ves, a thinking intelligent Being: that is to fay, whether that Order and Beauty and Use, visible in Natural Effects, could be produced by any thing but a Mind or Intelligence, in the proper Sense of the Word? And whether there must not be true, real, and proper Knowledge in the first Cause? We will therefore acknowledge, that all those natural Effects which are vulgarly ascribed to Knowledge and Wisdom, proceed from a Being in which there is, properly speaking, no Knowledge or Wifdom at all, but only fomething else, which, in reality, is the Cause of those things which Men, for want of knowing better, ascribe to what they call Knowledge, and Wisdom, and Understanding. You wonder perhaps to hear a Man of Pleasure, who diverts himself as I do, philosophize at this rate. But you should consider, that much is to be got by converfing with in-

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genious Men, which is a short way to DIAL. Knowledge, that faves a Man the Drudgery of Reading and Thinking. And now we have granted to you that there is a God in this indefinite Sense, I would fain fee what use you can make of this Concession. You cannot argue from unknown Attributes, or which is the same thing, from Attributes in an unknown Sense. You cannot prove, that God is to be loved for his Goodness, or feared for his Justice, or respected for his Knowledge: All which Confequences, we own, would follow from those Attributes admitted in an intelligible Sense. But we deny, that those or any other Consequences can be drawn from Attributes admitted in no particular Sense, or in a Sense which none of us understand. Since, therefore, nothing can be inferred from fuch an Account of God, about Conscience, or Worship, or Religion, you may even make the best of it: And, not to be fingular, we will use the Name too, and so at once there is an End of Atheism. EUPH. This Account of a Deity is new to me. I do not like it, and therefore shall leave it to be maintained by those who do.

XIX. CRI. It is not new to me. I remember not long fince to have heard a Minute

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DIAL. Minute Philosopher triumph upon this very Point; which put me on inquiring what Foundation there was for it in the Fathers or Schoolmen. And for ought that I can find, it owes its Original to those Writings, which have been published under the Name of Dionyfius the Areopagite. The Author of which, it must be owned, hath written upon the Divine Attributes in a very fingular Style. In his Treatise of the Coelestial Hierarchy* he faith, that God is something above all Essence and Life, work war av esiav & Cwiv: and again in his Treatife of the Divine Names +, that he is above all Wisdom and Understanding, τωές ωᾶσαν σοφίαν η σιώεσιν, ineffable and innominable, appnt & 2 ανώνυμ : the Wisdom of God he terms an unreasonanable, unintelligent, and foolish Wisdom; τ άλογον κ άνεν κ μωράν σοφίαν. But then the Reason he gives, for expressing himself in this strange Manner, is, that the Divine Wisdom is the Cause of all Reason, Wisdom, and Understanding, and therein are contained the Treasures of all Wisdom and Knowledge. He calls God τωέρσοφ and τωέρζως: As if Wisdom and Life were Words not worthy to express the Divine Perfections: And he adds, that the Attributes unin-* De Hierarch. Cœlest. c. 2. + De Nom. Div. c. 7.

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telligent and unperceiving must be ascrib-DIAL. ed to the Divinity, not xat Exhertiv by IV. way of Defect, but nat' vafoxin by way of Eminency: which he explains by our giving the Name of Darkness to Light inacceffible. And, notwithstanding the Harshness of his Expressions in some Places, he affirms over and over in others, that God knows all Things; not that he is beholden to the Creatures for his Knowledge, but by knowing himfelf, from whom they all derive their Being, and in whom they are contained as in their Cause. It was late before these Writings appear to have been known in the World: And although they obtained Credit during the Age of the Schoolmen, yet fince critical Learning hath been cultivated, they have loft that Credit, and are at this Day given up for spurious, as containing several evident Marks of a much later Date than the Age of Dionysius. Upon the whole, although this Method of growing in Expression, and dwindling in Notion, of clearing up Doubts by Nonsense, and avoiding Difficulties by running into affected Contradictions, may perhaps proceed from a well-meant Zeal; yet it appears not to be according to Knowledge, and instead of reconciling Atheists to the Truth, hath, I doubt, a Tendency to confirm

DIAL firm them in their own Persuasion. It should seem, therefore, very weak and rash in a Christian to adopt this harsh Language of an Apocryphal Writer, preferably to that of the Holy Scriptures. I remember, indeed, to have read of a certain Philosopher, who lived some Centuries ago, that used to say, if these suppofed Works of Dionyfius had been known to the Primitive Fathers, they would have furnished them admirable Weapons against the Hæretics, and would have faved a world of Pains. But the Event fince their Discovery hath by no means confirmed his Opinion. It must be owned, the celebrated Picus of Mirandula, among his Nine Hundred Conclusions (which that Prince, being very young, proposed to maintain by public Disputation at Rome) hath this for one; to wit, that it is more improper to fay of God, he is an Intellect or intelligent Being, than to fay of a reasonable Soul that it is an Angel: Which Doctrine it feems was not relished. And Picus, when he comes to defend it, supports himself altogether by the Example and Authority of Dionysius, and in effect explains it away into a meer verbal Difference, affirming, that neither Dionyfius nor himself ever meant to deprive God of Knowledge, or to deny that he knows all Things:

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all s: Things: But that, as Reason is of kind DIAL. peculiar to Man, fo by Intellection he un- IV. derstands a kind or manner of Knowing peculiar to Angels: And that the Knowledge, which is in God, is more above the Intellection of Angels, than Angel is above He adds that, as his Tenet confifts with admitting the most perfect Knowledge in God, fo he would by no Means be understood to exclude from the Deity Intellection itself, taken in the common or general Sense, but only that peculiar fort of Intellection proper to Angels, which he thinks ought not to be attributed to God any more than Humane Reason *. Picus, therefore, though he speaks as the Apocryphal Dionyfius, yet when he explains himself, it is evident he speaks like other Men. And although the formentioned Books of the Coelestial Hierarchy and of the Divine Names, being attributed to a Saint and Martyr of the Apostolical Age, were respected by the Schoolmen; yet it is certain they rejected or foftned his harsh Expressions, and explained away or reduced his Doctrine to the received Notions taken from Holy Scripture, and the Light of Nature.

^{*}Pic, Mirand, in Apolog. p. 155. Ed. Baf.

XX. Thomas Aguinas expresseth his Sense DIAL. of this Point in the following manner. All IV. Perfections, faith he, derived from God to the Creatures are in a certain higher Sense, or (as the Schoolmen term it) eminently in God. Whenever, therefore, a Name borrowed from any Perfection in the Creature is attributed to God, we must exclude from its Signification every thing that belongs to the imperfect Manner, wherein that Attribute is found in the Creature. Whence he concludes, that Knowledge in God is not an Habit, but a pure Act *. And again the fame Doctor observes, that our Intellect gets its Notions of all forts of Perfections from the Creatures, and that as it apprehends those Perfections, so it fignifies them by Names. Therefore, faith he, in attributing these Names to God, we are to consider two Things; first, The Perfections themfelves as Goodness, Life, and the like, which are properly in God; and, fecondly, The Manner which is peculiar to the Crea-

ture, and cannot, strictly and properly speak-

ing, be faid to agree to the Creator +. And

although Suarez, with other Schoolmen,

teacheth, that the Mind of Man conceiveth Knowledge and Will to be in God, as Faculties or Operations, by Analogy only

† Ibid. Quæst. 13. Art. 3.

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^{*} Sum. Theolog. p. 1. Quæst. 14. Art. 1.

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to created Beings; yet he gives it plainly DIAL. as his Opinion, that when Knowledge is faid not to be properly in God, it must be understood in a Sense including Impersection, fuch as discursive Knowledge, or the like imperfect kind found in the Creatures: And that, none of those Imperfections in the Knowledge of Men or Angels belonging to the formal Notion of Knowledge, or to Knowledgeas fuch, it will not thence follow that Knowledge, in its proper formal Sense, may not be attributed to God: And of Knowledge taken in general for the clear evident understanding of all Truth, he exprefly affirms that it is in God, and that this was never denied by any Philosopher who believed a God *. It was, indeed, a current Opinion in the Schools, that even Being itself should be attributed analogically to God and the Creatures. That is, they held that God, the supreme, independent, self-originate Cause and Source of all Beings, must not be supposed to exist in the same Sense with created Beings, not that he exists less truly, properly, or formally than they, but only because he exists in a more eminent and perfect Manner.

XXI. But to prevent any Man's being led, by mistaking the Scholastic Use of the

Terms

^{*}Suarez Disp. Metaph. Tom. 2. Disp. 30. Sect. 15.

IV.

DIAL. Terms Analogy and Analogical, into an Opinion that we cannot frame in any Degree, a true and proper Notion of Attributes applied by Analogy, or, in the School Phrase, predicated analogically, it may not be amiss to inquire into the true Sense and Meaning of those Words. Every one knows, that Analogy is a Greek Word used by Mathematicians, to fignify a Similitude of Proportions. For Instance, when we observe that Two is to Six, as Three is to Nine, this Similitude or Equality of Proportion is termed Analogy. And although Proportion strictly fignifies the Habitude or Relation of one Quantity to another, yet in a loofer and translated Sense, it hath been applied to fignify every other Habitude: And confequently the Term Analogy comes to fignify all Similitude of Relations, or Habitudes whatfoever. Hence, the Schoolmen tell us there is Analogy between Intellect and Sight: Forafmuch as, Intellect is to the Mind, what Sight is to the Body? And that he who governs the State is analogous to him who steers a Ship. Hence a Prince is analogically stiled a Pilot, being to the State as a Pilot is to his Veffel *. For the farther clearing of this Point it is to be observed, that a two-fold Analogy is distinguished by the School-

* Vide Cajetan. de Nom. Analog. c. 3.

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men, metaphorical and proper. Of the DIAL. first Kind there are frequent Instances in IV. Holy Scripture, attributing Humane Parts and Paffions to God. When he is reprefented as having a Finger, an Eye, or an Ear: when he is faid to repent, to be angry, or grieved: every one fees the Analogy is meerly metaphorical. Because those Parts and Passions, taken in the proper Signification, must in every Degree necesfarily, and from the formal Nature of the Thing, include Imperfection. When therefore it is faid, The Finger of God appears in this or that Event, Men of common Sense mean no more, that it is as truly ascribed to God, as the Works wrought by Humane Fingers are to Man: and fo of the rest. But the Case is different, when Wisdom and Knowledge are attributed to God. Passions and Senses, as such, imply Defect: but in Knowledge fimply, or as fuch, there is no Defect. Knowledge therefore, in the proper formal Meaning of the Word, may be attributed to God proportionably, that is, preserving a Proportion to the infinite Nature of God. We may fay, therefore, that as God is infinitely above Man, fo is the Knowledge of God infinitely above the Knowledge of Man, and this is what Cajetan calls Analogia VOL. I.

DIAL proprie facta. And after this same Ana-IV. logy, we must understand all those Attributes to belong to the Deity, which in themselves simply, and as such, denote Perfection. We may therefore confistently with what hath been premised, affirm that all forts of Perfection, which we can conceive in a finite Spirit, are in God, but without any of that Allay which is found in the Creatures. This Doctrine therefore of Analogical Perfections in God, or our knowing God by Analogy, feems very much mifunderstood and misapplied by those who would infer from thence: that we cannot frame any direct or proper Notion, though never fo inadequate, of Knowledge or Wisdom, as they are in the Deity: or understand any more of them than one born blind can of Light and Colours.

XXII. And now, Gentlemen, it may be expected I should ask your Pardon for having dwelt so long on a Point of Metaphysics, and introduced such unpolished and unfashionable Writers, as the Schoolmen, into good Company: but as Lysicles gave the Occasion, I leave him to answer for it. LYS. I never dreamt of this dry Differtation. But, if I have been the Occasion of discussing these Scholastic Points,

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Points, by my unlucky mentioning the DIAL. Schoolmen, it was my first Fault of the IV. Kind, and I promise it shall be the last. The meddling with crabbed Authors of any fort, is none of my Taste. I grant one meets now and then with a good Notion in what we call dry Writers, fuch an one for example as this I was speaking of, which I must own struck my Fancy. But then for these, we have such as Prodicus or Diagoras, who look into obsolete Books, and fave the rest of us that trouble. CRI. So you pin your Faith upon them. LYS. It is only for some odd Opinions, and Matters of Fact, and critical Points. Besides, we know the Men to whom we give credit: They are judicious and honest, and have no End to ferve but Truth. And I am confident some Author or other has maintained the forementioned Notion in the fame Sense as Diagoras related it. CRI. That may be. But it never was a received Notion, and never will, fo long as Men believe a God: the fame Arguments that prove a first Cause, proving an intelligent Cause: Intelligent, I say, in the proper Sense: Wife and Good in the true and formal Acceptation of the Words. Otherwise it is evident, that every Syllogism brought to prove those Attributes, or (which is the same thing) to prove the

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ic s, IV. of four Terms, and confequently can conclude nothing. But for your part, Alciphron, you have been fully convinced, that God is a thinking intelligent Being in the fame Sense with other Spirits, though not in the same impersect Manner or Degree.

XXIII. ALC. And yet I am not without my Scruples: For with Knowledge you infer Wisdom, and with Wisdom Tho I cannot fee that it is ei-Goodness. ther wife, or good, to enact fuch Laws as can never be obey'd. CRI. Doth any one find fault with the Exactness of Geometrical Rules, because no one in Practice can attain to it? The Perfection of a Rule is useful, even though it is not reach-Many may approach what all may fall short of. ALC. But how is it possible to conceive God fo good, and Man fo wicked? It may perhaps with fome Colour be alledged, that a little foft shadowing of Evil fets off the bright and luminous Parts of the Creation, and fo contributes to the Beauty of the whole Piece: But, for Blots fo large and fo black it is impossible to account by that Principle. That there should be so much Vice, and fo little Virtue upon Earth, and that the Laws of God's Kingdom should be so ill observed

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observed by his Subjects, is what can never DIAL. be reconciled with that furpaffing Wif- IV. dom and Goodness of the supreme Mo-EUPH. Tell me, Alcipbron, narch. would you argue that a State was ill administred, or judge of the Manners of its Citizens, by the Diforders committed in the Goal or Dungeon? ALC. I would not. EUPH. And for ought we know, this Spot with the few Sinners on it, bears no greater Proportion to the Universe of Intelligences, than a Dungeon doth to a Kingdom. It feems we are led not only by Revelation, but by common Sense, obferving and inferring from the Analogy of visible Things, to conclude there are innumerable Orders of intelligent Beings more happy and more perfect than Man: whose Life is but a Span, and whose Place, this earthly Globe, is but a Point, in respect of the whole System of God's Creation. We are dazzled indeed with the Glory and Grandeur of things here below, because we know no better. But I am apt to think, if we knew what it was to be an Angel for one Hour, we should return to this World, though it were to fit on the brightest Throne in it, with vastly more Lothing and Reluctance, than we would now descend into a loathsome Dungeon or Sepulchre. XXIV.

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XXIV. CRI. To me it feems natural, DIAL. that fuch a weak, passionate, and shortfighted Creature as Man, should be ever liable to Scruples of one kind or other. But, as this same Creature is apt to be over-positive in judging, and over-hasty in concluding, it falls out, that these Difficulties and Scruples about God's Conduct are made Objections to his Being. And so Men come to argue from their own Defects, against the Divine Perfections. And, as the Views and Humours of Men are different, and often opposite, you may fometimes fee them deduce the fame atheistical Conclusion from contrary Premises. I knew an Instance of this in two Minute Philosophers of my Acquaintance, who used to argue each from his own Temper against a Providence. them, a Man of a choleric and vindictive Spirit, faid he could not believe a Providence: because London was not swallowed up or confumed by Fire from Heaven: the Streets being, as he faid, full of People, who shew no other Belief or Worship of God, but perpetually praying that he would damn, rot, fink, and confound The other, being of an indolent and eafy Temper, concluded there could be no fuch thing as a Providence: for that a Being of confummate Wisdom must needs

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needs employ himself better, than in mind-DIAL. ing the Prayers, and Actions, and little In-IV. terests of Mankind. ALC. After all, if God have no Passions, how can it be true that Vengeance is his? Or how can he be said to be jealous of his Glory? CRI. We believe that God executes Vengeance without Revenge, and is jealous without Weakness, just as the Mind of Man sees without Eyes, and apprehends without Hands.

XXV. ALC. To put a Period to this Discourse, we will grant, there is a God in this dispassionate Sense: but what then? What hath this to do with Religion or Divine Worship? To what purpose are all these Prayers, and Praises, and Thanksgivings, and Singing of Psalms, which the foolish Vulgar call serving God? What Sense, or Use, or End is there in all these things? CRI. We worship God, we praise and pray to him: not because we think that he is proud of our Worship, or fond of our Praise or Prayers, and affected with them as Mankind are: or that all our Service can contribute in the least Degree to his Happiness or Good; But because it is good for us, to be so disposed towards God: because it is just and right, and fuitable to the Nature of Things, S 4

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IV. stand in to our supreme Lord and Governor. ALC. If it be good for us to worship God, it should seem that the Christian Religion, which pretends to teach Men the Knowledge and Worship of God, was of some Use and Benefit to Mankind. CRI. Doubtless. ALC. If this can be made appear, I shall own my self very much mistaken. CRI. It is now near Dinner time. Wherefore, if you please, we will put an end to this Conversation for the present, and to Morrow Morning resume our Subject.



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DIAL. V.

THE FIFTH DIALOGUE.

I. Minute Philosophers join in this Cry, and follow the Scent of others. II. Worship prescribed by the Christian Religion suitable to God and Man. III. Power and Influence of the Druids. IV. Excellency and Usefulness of the Christian Religion. V. It ennobles Mankind, and makes them happy. VI. Religion neither Bigotry nor Superstition. VII. Physicians and Physic for the Soul. VIII. Character of the Clergy. IX. Natural Religion and Humane Reason not to be disparaged. X. Tendency and Use of the Gentile Religion. XI. Good Effects of Christianity. XII. Englishmen compared with ancient Greeks XIII. The Modern Pracand Romans. tice of Duelling. XIV. Character of the Old Romans, how to be formed. XV. Genuine Fruits of the Gospel. XVI. Wars and Factions not an Effect of the Christian Religion. XVII. Civil Rage and Massacres in Greece and Rome. XVIII. Virtue of ancient Greeks. XIX. Quarrels of Polemical Divines. XX. Tyranny, Usurpation, Sophistry of Ecclefiaftics.

DIAL. IV.

haftics. XXI. The Univerfities censured. XXII. Divine Writings of a certain mo-XXIII. Learning the Efdern Critic. feet of Religion. XXIV. Barbarism of the Schools. XXV. Restoration of Learning and polite Arts, to whom owing. XXVI. Prejudice and Ingratitude of Minute Philosophers. XXVII. Their Pretensions and Conduct inconsistent. XXVIII. Men and Brutes compared with respect to Religion. XXIX. Christianity the only Means to establish Natural Religion. XXX. Free-thinkers mistake their Talents; bave a strong Imagination. XXXI. Tithes and Church-lands. XXXII. Men distinguished from Humane Creatures. XXXIII. Distribution of Mankind into Birds, Beasts, and Fishes. XXXIV. Plea for Reason allowed, but Unfairness taxed. XXXV. Freedom a Blessing or a Curse as it is used. XXXVI. Priestcraft not the reigning Evil.

I. E amused our selves next Day, every one to his Fancy, till Nine of the Clock, when Word was brought that the Tea-table was fet in the Li-

brary: which is a Gallery on a Groundfloor, with an arched Door at one End opening

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look by tl cent opening into a Walk of Limes; where, as DIAL. foon as we had drank Tea, we were tempted by fine Weather to take a Walk which led us to a small Mount of easy Ascent, on the Top whereof we found a Seat under a spreading Tree. Here we had a Prospect on one Hand of a narrow Bay or Creek of the Sea, inclosed on either Side by a Coast beautified with Rocks and Woods, and green Banks and Farm-houses. At the End of the Bay was a small Town placed upon the Slope of a Hill, which from the Advantage of its Situation made a confiderable Figure. Several Fishingboats and Lighters gliding up and down on a Surface as smooth and bright as Glass enlivened the Prospect. On the other Side we looked down on green Pastures, Flocks, and Herds, basking beneath in Sun-shine, while we in our superior Situation enjoyed the Freshness of Air and Shade, Here we felt that fort of joyful Instinct which a rural Scene and fine Weather inspire; and proposed no small Pleafure, in refuming and continuing our Conference without Interruption till Dinner: But we had hardly feated ourselves, and looked about us, when we faw a Fox run by the Foot of our Mount into an adjacent Thicket. A few Minutes after, we heard

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DIAL. heard a confused Noise of the opening of Hounds, the winding of Horns, and the roaring of Country Squires. While our Attention was suspended by this Event, a Servant came running out of Breath and told Crito, that his Neighbour Ctefippus, a Squire of Note, was fallen from his Horse attempting to leap over a Hedge, and brought into the Hall, where he lay for dead. Upon which we all rose and walked haftily to the House, where we found Ctefippus just come to himself, in the midst of half a dozen Sun-burnt Squires in Frocks and short Wigs, and Jockey-Boots. Being asked how he did? he answered it was only a broken Rib. With fome Difficulty Crito persuaded him to lie on a Bed till the These Fox-hunters, Chirurgeon came. having been up early at their Sport, were eager for Dinner, which was accordingly hastened. They passed the Afternoon in a loud rustic Mirth, gave Proof of their Religion and Loyalty by the Healths they drank, talked of Hounds and Horses and Elections, and Country Affairs, till the Chirurgeon, who had been employed about Ctesippus, defired he might be put into Crito's Coach, and fent home, having refused to stay all Night. Our Guests being gone, we reposed ourselves after on nice Con not as h Con ther ing be d Hun Dog

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the Fatigue of this tumultuous Visit, and DIAL. next Morning affembled again at the Seat on the Mount. Now Lyficles, being a nice Man, and a bel esprit, had an infinite Contempt for the rough Manners and Conversation of Fox-hunters, and could not reflect with Patience that he had loft, as he called it, so many Hours in their Company. I flattered myself, said he, that there had been none of this Species remaining among us: Strange that Men should be diverted with fuch uncouth Noise and Hurry, or find Pleasure in the Society of Dogs and Horses! How much more elegant are the Diversions of the Town! There feems, replied Euphranor, to be fome Refemblance between Fox-hunters and Free-thinkers; the former exerting their animal Faculties in Pursuit of Game, as you Gentlemen employ your Intellectuals in the Pursuit of Truth. The Kind of Amusement is the same, although the Object be different. LYS. I had rather be compared to any Brute upon Earth than a rational Brute. CRI. You would then have been less displeased with my Friend Pythocles, whom I have heard compare the common fort of Minute Philosophers, not to the Hunters, but the Hounds. For, faid he, you shall often see among the Dogs

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V. lead the unskilful Part of the Pack; who join all in his Cry without following any Scent of their own, any more than the Herd of Free-thinkers follow their own Reason.

II. But Pythocles was a blunt Man, and must never have known such Reasoners among them as you Gentlemen, who can fit folong at an Argument, dispute every Inch of Ground, and yet know when to make a reasonable Concession. LYS. I don't know how it came to pass, but methinks Alciphron makes Concessions for himself and me too. For my own part, I am not altogether of fuch a yielding Temper: But yet I don't care to be fingular neither. CRI. Truly, Alciphron, when I confider where we are got, and how far we are agreed, I conceive it probable we may agree altogether in the End. You havegranted that a Life of Virtue is upon all Accounts eligible, as most conducive both to the general and particular Good of Mankind: And you allow, that the Beauty of Virtue alone is not a sufficient Motive with Mankind to the Practice of it. This led you to acknowledge, that the Belief of a God would be very useful in the World:

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World: And that consequently you should DIAL. be disposed to admit any reasonable Proof V. of his Being: Which Point hath been proved, and you have admitted the Proof. If then we admit a Divinity, why not Divine Worship? And if Worship, why not Religion to teach this Worship? And if a Religion, why not the Christian, if a better cannot be affigned, and it be already established by the Laws of our Country, and handed down to us from our Fore-fathers? Shall we believe a God, and not pray to him for future Benefits nor thank him for the past? Neither trust in his Protection, nor love his Goodness, nor praise his Wisdom, nor adore his Power? And if these Things are to be done, can we do them in a Way more fuitable to the Dignity of God or Man, than is prescribed by the Christian Religion? ALC. I am not perhaps altogether fure that Religion must be absolutely bad for the Public: But I cannot bear to fee Policy and Religion walk hand in hand: I do not like to fee Humane Rights attached to the Divine: I am for no Pontifex Maximus, fuch as in ancient or in modern Rome: No high Priest, as in Judæa: No Royal Priests, as in Ægypt and Sparta: No fuch Things as Dairos of Japan, or Lamas of Tartary.

III. I knew

HI. I knew a late witty Gentleman of our Sect, who was a great Admirer of the ancient Druids. He had a mortal Antipathy to the present established Religion, but used to say he should like well to see the Druids and their Religion restored, as it anciently flourished in Gaul and Britain; for it would be right enough that there should be a Number of contemplative Men fet apart to preserve a Knowledge of Arts and Sciences, to educate Youth, and teach Men the Immortality of the Soul and the moral Virtues. Such, faid he, were the Druids of old, and I should be glad to fee them once more established among us. CRI. How would you like, Alciphron, that Priests should have Power to decide all Controversies, adjudge Property, distribute Rewards and Punishments: that all who did not acquiesce in their Decrees should be excommunicated, held in Abhorrence, excluded from all Honours and Privileges, and deprived of the common Benefit of the Laws: and that now and then, a Number of Lay-men should be crammed together in a Wicker-idol, and burnt for an Offering to their Pagan Gods? How should you like living under such Priests and fuch a Religion? ALC. Not at all. Such a Situation would by no means agree with Free-

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Free-thinkers. CRI. And yet fuch were DIAL. the Druids, and fuch their Religion, if we may trust Cæsar's Account of them*. LYS. I am now convinced more than ever, there ought to be no fuch Thing as an established Religion of any kind. Certainly all the Nations of the World have been hitherto out of their Wits. Even the Athenians themselves, the wisest and freest People upon Earth, had, I know not what, foolish Attachment to their established Church. They offered, it feems, a Talent as a Reward to whoever should kill Diagoras the Melian, a Free-thinker of those Times, who derided their Mysteries: And Protagoras, another of the fame Turn, narrowly escaped being put to Death, for having wrote fomething that feemed to contradict their received Notions of the Gods. Such was the Treatment our generous Sect met with at Athens. And I make no doubt, but these Druids would have facrificed many a Holocaust of Free-thinkers. would not give a fingle Farthing to exchange one Religion for another. Away with all together, Root and Branch, or you had as good do nothing. No Druids or Priests of any fort for me: I see no occasion for any of them.

VOL. I.

IV. EUPH.

^{*} De Beilo Gallico, 1.6.

IV. EUPH. What Lyficles faith, puts DIAL. me in mind of the Close of our last Conference, wherein it was agreed in the following, to resume the Point we were then entered upon: to wit, the Use or Benefit of the Christian Religion, which Alcipbron expected Crito should make appear. CRI. I am the readier to undertake this Point, because I conceive it to be no difficult one, and that one great Mark of the Truth of Christianity is, in my Mind, its Tendency to do Good, which feems the North-Star to conduct our Judgment in moral Matters, and in all things of a practic Nature; moral or practical Truths being ever connected with universal Benefit. But to judge rightly of this Matter, we should endeavour to act like Lysicles upon another Occasion, taking into our View the Sum of Things, and confidering Principles as branched forth into Consequences to the utmost Extent we are able. We are not fo much to regard the Humour or Caprice, or imaginary Distresses of a few idle Men, whose Conceit may be offended, though their Conscience cannot be wounded; but fairly to confider the true Interest of Individuals, as well as of Humane Society. Now the Christian Religion, confidered as a Fountain of Light, and Joy, and Peace,

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as a Source of Faith, and Hope, and Cha-DIAL. rity, (and that it is so, will be evident to V. whoever takes his Notion of it from the Gospel) must needs be a Principle of Happiness and Virtue. And he who sees not, that the destroying the Principles of good Actions must destroy good Actions, sees nothing: And he who, seeing this, shall yet persist to do it, if he be not wicked, who is?

V. To me it feems the Man can fee neither deep nor far, who is not sensible of his own Misery, Sinfulness, and Dependence; who doth not perceive, that this present World is not designed or adapted to make rational Souls happy; who would not be glad of getting into a better State; and who would not be overjoy'd to find, that the Road leading thither was the Love of God and Man, the practifing every Virtue, the living reasonably while we are here upon Earth, proportioning our Esteem to the Value of Things, and so using this World as not to abuse it. For this is what Christianity requires. It neither injoins the Nastiness of the Cynic, nor the Insenfibility of the Stoic. Can there be a higher Ambition than to overcome the World, or a wifer than to fubdue ourselves, or a T 2 more DIAL more comfortable Doctrine than the Remission of Sins, or a more joyful Prospect than that of having our base Nature renewed and affimilated to the Deity, our being made Fellow-Citizens with Angels and Sons of God? Did ever Pythagoreans, or Platonists, or Stoics, even in Idea or in Wish, propose to the Mind of Man purer Means, or a nobler End? How great a Share of our Happiness depends upon Hope! How totally is this extinguished by the Minute Philosophy! On the other hand, how is it cherished and raised by the Gospel! Let any Man who thinks in earnest but consider these things, and then fay which he thinks deserveth best of Mankind, he who recommends, or he who runs down Christianity? Which he thinks likelier to lead a happy Life, to be a hopeful Son, an honest Dealer, a worthy Patriot, He who fincerely believes the Gofpel, or He who believes not one Tittle of it? He who aims at being a Child of God, or He who is contented to be thought, and to be, one of Epicurus's Hogs? And in fact, do but scan the Characters, and observe the Behaviour of the common fort of Men on both fides: Obferve, and fay which live most agreeably to the Dictates of Reason? How things should

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Vi De just should be, the Reason is plain: how they DIALare, I appeal to Fact. V.

VI. ALC. It is wonderful to observe how things change Appearance, as they are viewed in different Lights, or by different Eyes. The Picture, Crito, that I form of Religion is very unlike yours, when I confider how it unmans the Soul, filling it with abfurd Reveries, and flavish Fears: how it extinguishes the gentle Passions, inspiring a Spirit of Malice, and Rage, and Persecution: When I behold bitter Refentments and unholy Wrath in those very Men, who preach up Meekness and Charity to others. CRI. It is very posfible, that Gentlemen of your Sect may think Religion a Subject beneath their Attention: but yet it feems that whoever fets up for oppofing any Doctrine, should know what it is he disputes against. Know then, that Religion is the virtuous Mean between Incredulity and Superstition. We do not therefore contend for superstitious Follies, or for the Rage of Bigots. What we plead for is, Religion against Profaneness, Law against Confusion, Virtue against Vice, the Hope of a Christian against the Despondency of an Atheist. I will not justify bitter Resentments and unholy Wrath T 3

DIAL. Wrath in any Man, much less in a Christian, and least of all in a Clergyman. But if Sallies of Humane Paffion should sometimes appear even in the best, it will not furprise any one who reflects on the Sarcasms and ill Manners with which they are treated by the Minute Philosophers. For, as Cicero somewhere observes, Habet quendam aculeum Contumelia, quem pati prudentes ac viri boni difficillime possunt. But although you might sometimes observe particular Persons, professing themselves Christians, run into faulty Extremes of any Kind, through Passion and Infirmity, while Infidels of a more calm and difpafsionate Temper shall perhaps behave better. Yet these natural Tendencies on either side prove nothing, either in favour of Infidel Principles, or against Christian. If a Believer doth Evil, it is owing to the Man, not to his Belief. And if an Infidel doth Good, it is owing to the Man, and not to his Infidelity.

> VII. LYS. To cut this Matter short, I shall borrow an Allusion to Physic, which one of you made use of against our It will not be denied, that the Clergy pass for Physicians of the Soul, and that Religion is a fort of Medicine which they

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they deal in and administer. If then DIAL. Souls in great numbers are diseased and loft, how can we think the Physician skilful, or his Physic good? It is a common Complaint, that Vice increases, and Men grow daily more and more wicked. If a Shepherd's Flock be diseased or unfound, who is to blame but the Shepherd, for neglecting, or not knowing how to cure them? A Fig therefore for fuch Shepherds, fuch Physic, and such Physicians, who like other Mountebanks, with great Gravity and elaborate Harangues put off their Pills to the People, who are never the better for them. EUPH. Nothing feems more reasonable than this Remark, That Men should judge of a Physician and his Physic, by its Effect on the Sick. But pray, Lyficles, would you judge of a Phyfician, by those Sick who take his Physic and follow his Prescriptions, or by those who do not? LYS. Doubtless by those who do. EUPH. What shall we say then, if great numbers refuse to take the Physic, or instead of it take Poison of a direct contrary Nature prescribed by others, who make it their Bufiness to discredit the Phyfician and his Medicines, to hinder Men from using them, and to destroy their Effect by Drugs of their own? Shall the Phyfician

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V. those People? LYS. By no means. EUPH.

By a parity of Reason should it not follow, that the Tendency of religious Doctrines ought to be judged of by the Effects which they produce, not upon all who hear them, but upon those only who receive or believe them? LYS. It seems so. EUPH. Therefore to proceed fairly, shall we not judge of the Effects of Religion by the Religious, of Faith by Believers, of Christianity by Christians?

VIII. LYS. But I doubt these fincere Believers are very few. EUPH. But will it not fuffice to justify our Principles, if in proportion to the Numbers which receive them, and the degree of Faith with which they are received, they produce good Effects. Perhaps the Number of Believers are not so few as you imagine: and if they were, whose Fault is that so much as of those who make it their professed Endeavour to lessen that Number? And who are those but the Minute Philosophers? LYS. I tell you it is owing to the Clergy themfelves, to the Wickedness and Corruption of Clergymen. EUPH. And who denies but there may be Minute Philosophers even among the Clergy? CRI. In fo numerous a Body

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a Body it is to be presumed there are Men DIAL. of all forts. But notwithstanding the cruel Reproaches cast upon that Order by their Enemies, an equal Observer of Men and Things will, if I mistake not, be inclined to think those Reproaches owing as much to other Faults, as those of the Clergy: efpecially if he confiders the declamatory manner of those who censure them. EUPH. My Knowledge of the World is too narrow for me to pretend to judge of the Virtue, and Merit, and liberal Attainments of Men in the several Professions. Besides, I should not care for the odious Work of Comparison: But I may venture to fay, the Clergy of this Country where I live are by no means a Difgrace to it: on the contrary, the People seem much the better for their Example and Doctrine. But supposing the Clergy to be (what all Men certainly are) Sinners, and faulty; supposing you might spy out here and there among them even great Crimes and Vices, what can you conclude against the Profession it self from its unworthy Profesfors, any more than from the Pride, Pedantry, and bad Lines of some Philosophers against Philosophy, or of Lawyers against Law?

DIAL. IX. It is certainly right to judge of Principles from their Effects, but then we must know them to be Effects of those Principles. It is the very Method I have observed, with respect to Religion and the Minute Philosophy. And I can honestly aver, that I never knew any Man or Family grow worse in proportion as they grew religious: But I have often obferved, that Minute Philosophy is the worst thing which can get into a Family, the readiest way to impoverish, divide, and difgrace it. ALC. By the same Method of tracing Causes from their Effects, I have made it my Observation, That the Love of Truth, Virtue, and the Happiness of Mankind are specious Pretexts, but not the inward Principles that fet Divines at work: Else why should they affect to abuse Humane Reason, to disparage Natural Religion, to traduce the Philosophers, as they univerfally do? CRI. Not fo univerfally perhaps as you imagine. A Christian, indeed, is for confining Reason within its due Bounds: and fo is every reasonable Man. If we are forbid meddling with unprofitable Questions, vain Philosophy, and Science falfly so called, it cannot be thence inferred, that all Inquiries into profitable Questions, useful Phi-

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Philosophy, and true Science, are unlaw-DIAL. ful. A Minute Philosopher may indeed impute, and perhaps a weak Brother may imagine those Inferences, but Men of Sense will never make them. God is the common Father of Lights: and all Knowledge really fuch, whether natural or revealed, is derived from the same Source of Light and Truth. To amass together Authorities upon fo plain a Point would be needless. It must be owned some Mens attributing too much to Humane Reason, hath, as is natural, made others attribute too little to it. But thus much is generally acknowledged, that there is a natural Religion, which may be discovered and proved by the Light of Reason, to those who are capable of fuch Proofs. must be withal acknowledged, that Precepts and Oracles from Heaven are incomparably better fuited to popular Improvement, and the Good of Society, than the Reasonings of Philosophers: and accordingly we do not find, that natural or rational Religion, as such, ever became the popular national Religion of any Country.

X. ALC. It cannot be denied, that in all Heathen Countries there have been received

DIAL ceived under the colour of Religion, a world of Fables and superstitious Rites. But I question whether they were so absurd and of so bad Influence, as is vulgarly represented, fince their respective Legislators and Magistrates must, without doubt, have thought them useful. CRI. It were needless to inquire into all the Rites and Notions of the Gentile World. This hath been largely done when it was thought ne-And whoever thinks it worth while, may be eafily fatisfied about them. But as to the Tendency and Usefulness of the Heathen Religion in general, I beg leave to mention a Remark of St. Augustine's *, who observes that the Heathens in their Religion had no Affemblies for preaching, wherein the People were to be instructed what Duties or Virtues the Gods required, no Place or Means to be taught what Perfius + exhorts them to learn.

> Disciteque ô miseri, & causas cognoscite rerum, Quid sumus, & quidnam victuri gignimur.—

ALC. This is the true Spirit of the Party, never to allow a Grain of Use or Goodness to any thing out of their own Pale: But we have had learned Men who have

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^{*} De Civitate Dei 1. 2. + Sat. 3.

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done Justice to the Religion of the Gentiles. DIAL. CRI. We do not deny but there was fomething useful in the old Religions of Rome and Greece, and fome other Pagan Countries. On the contrary, we freely own they produced some good Effects on the People: But then these good Effects were owing to the Truths contained in those false Religions: the truer therefore, the more useful. I believe you will find it a hard Matter to produce any useful Truth, any moral Precept, any falutary Principle or Notion in any Gentile System, either of Religion or Philosophy, which is not comprehended in the Christian, and either enforced by stronger Motives, or supported by better Authority, or carried to a higher Point of Perfection.

XI. Consequently you would have us think our selves a finer People than the ancient Greeks or Romans. CRI. If by finer you mean better, perhaps we are: and if we are not, it is not owing to the Christian Religion, but to the want of it. ALC. You say perhaps we are. I do not pique my self on my Reading: But should be very ignorant to be capable of being imposed on in so plain a Point. What! compare Cicero or Brutus to an English Patriot,

DIAL. Patriot, or Seneca to one of our Parsons! Then that invincible Constancy and Vigour of Mind, that difinterested and noble Virtue, that adorable publick Spirit you fo much admire, are things in them so well known, and so different from our Manners, that I know not how to excuse your per-Euphranor, indeed, who passeth his Life in this obscure Corner, may possibly mistake the Characters of our Times: but you who know the World, how could you be guilty of fuch a Mistake? CRI. O Alciphron! I would by no means detract from the noble Virtue of ancient Heroes: But I observe those great Men were not the Minute Philosophers of their Times: and that the best Principles upon which they acted are common to them with Christians, of whom it would be no difficult Matter to affign, if not in our own Times, yet within the compass of our own History, many Instances, in every Kind of Worth and Virtue, publick or private, equal to the most celebrated of the Ancients. Though perhaps their Story might not have been fo well told, fet off with fuch fine Lights and Colourings of Style, or fo vulgarly known and confidered by every School-Boy. But though it should

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Roman Genius, bred up under strict Laws DI AL. and fevere Discipline, animated to public Virtue by Statues, Crowns, Triumphal Arches, and fuch Rewards and Monuments of great Actions, might attain to a Character and Fame beyond other Men; yet this will prove only, that they had more Spirit, and lived under a civil Polity more wisely ordered in certain Points than ours: Which Advantages of Nature and Civil Institution will be no Argument for their Religion, or against ours. On the contrary, it feems an invincible Proof of the Power and Excellency of the Christian Religion, that, without the help of those Civil Institutions and Incentives to Glory, it should be able to inspire a Phlegmatic People with the noblest Sentiments, and foften the rugged Manners of Northern Boors into Gentleness and Humanity: and that these good Qualities should become National, and rife and fall in proportion to the Purity of our Religion, as it approaches to, or recedes from the Plan laid down in the Gospel.

XII. To make a right Judgment of the Effects of the Christian Religion, let us take a Survey of the prevailing Notions and Manners of this very Country where

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DIAL. we live, and compare them with those of our Heathen Predecessors. ALC. I have heard much of the glorious Light of the Gospel, and should be glad to see some Effects of it in my own dear Country, which, by the bye, is one of the most corrupt and profligate upon Earth, notwithstanding the boasted Purity of our Religion. But it would look mean and diffident, to affect a Comparison with the barbarous Heathen, from whence we drew our Original: If you would do honour to your Religion, dare to make it with the most renowned Heathens of Antiquity. CRI. It is a common Prejudice, to despise the present, and over-rate remote Times and Things. Something of this feems to enter into the Judgments Men make of the Greeks and Romans. For though it must be allowed, those Nations produced some noble Spirits and great Paterns of Virtue: yet upon the whole, it feems to me they were much inferior in point of real Virtue and good Morals, even to this corrupt and profligate Nation, as you are now pleased to call it in dishonour to cur Religion; however you may think fit to characterize it, when you would do honour to the Minute Philosophy. This, I think, will be plain to any one, who shall

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shall turn off his Eyes from a few shining DIAL. Characters, to view the general Manners V. and Customs of those People. Their infolent Treatment of Captives, even of the highest Rank and softer Sex, their unnatural exposing of their own Children, their bloody Gladiatorian Spectacles, compared with the common Notions of Englishmen, are to me a plain Proof, that our Minds are much foftened by Christianity. Could any thing be more unjust, than the condemning a young Lady to the most infamous Punishment and Death for the Guilt of her Father, or a whole Family of Slaves, perhaps fome hundreds for a Crime committed by one? Or more abominable than their Bacchanals and unbridled Lusts of every kind? which, notwithstanding all that has been done by Minute Philosophers to debauch the Nation, and their successful Attempts on some part of it, have not yet been matched among us, at least not in every Circumstance of Impudence and Effrontery. While the Romans were poor, they were temperate; but, as they grew rich, they became luxurious to a Degree that is hardly believed or conceived by us. It cannot be denied, the old Roman Spirit VOL. I.

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V. have been numberless Examples of the work resolute and clear Courage in Britons, and in general from a Religious Cause. Upon the whole, it seems an Instance of the greatest Blindness and Ingratitude, that we do not see and own the exceeding great Benefits of Christianity, which, to omit higher Considerations, hath so visibly softened, polished, and embellished our Manners.

XIII. ALC. O Crito, we are alarmed at Cruelty in a foreign Shape, but overlook it in a familiar one. Else how is it possible that you should not see the Inhumanity of that barbarous Custom of Duelling, a Thing avowed and tolerated and even reputable among us? Or that feeing this, you should suppose our Englishmen of a more gentle Disposition than the old Romans, who were altogether Strangers to it? CRI. I will by no means make an Apology for every Goth that walks the Streets, with a determined Purpose to murder any Man who shall but fpit in his Face, or give him the Lye. Nor do I think the Christian Religion in the least answerable, for a Practice so directly opposite to its Precepts, and which obtains

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obtains only among the idle Part of the DIAL. Nation, your Men of Fashion; who, instead of Law, Reason, or Religion, are governed by Fashion. Be pleased to confider that what may be, and truly is, a most scandalous Reproach to a Christian Country, may be none at all to the Christian Religion: For the Pagan encouraged Men in feveral Vices, but the Christian in none. ALC. Give me leave to observe, that what you now fay is foreign to the Purpose. For the Question, at present, is not concerning the respective Tendencies of the Pagan and the Christian Religions, but concerning our Manners, as actually compared with those of ancient Heathens, who I aver had no fuch barbarous Custom as Duelling. CRI. And I aver that, bad as this is, they had a worse: and that was Poi-By which we have reason to think there were many more Lives destroyed, than by this Gothic Crime of Duelling: Inafmuch as it extended to all Ages, Sexes, and Characters, and as its Effects were more secret and unavoidable: and as it had more Temptations, Interest as well as Passion, to recommend it to wicked Men. And for the Fact, not to waste Time, I refer you to the Roman U 2 Authors

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DIAL. Authors themselves. LYS. It is very true: Duelling is not fo general a Nusance as Poisoning, nor of so base a Nature. This Crime, if it be a Crime, is in a fair way to keep its Ground in spite of the Law and the Gospel. The Clergy never preach against it, because themselves never suffer by it: and the Man of Honour must not appear against the means of vindicating Honour. CRI. Though it be remarked by fome of your Sect, that the Clergy are not used to preach against Duelling, yet I neither think the Remark it felf just, nor the Reason affigned for it. In effect, one half of their Sermons, all that is faid of Charity, Brotherly Love, Forbearance, Meekness, and Forgiving Injuries is directly against this wicked Custom; by which the Clergy themselves are so far from never fuffering, that perhaps they will be found, all Things confidered, to fuffer oftner than other Men. LYS. How do you make this appear? CRI. An Obferver of Mankind may remark two kinds of Bully, the Fighting and the Tame, both public Nusances: the former (who is the more dangerous Animal, but by much the less common of the two) employs himself wholly and solely against the Laity, while the tame Species exert

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their Talents upon the Clergy. The DIAL. Qualities constituent of this tame Bully are natural Rudeness joined with a delicate Sense of Danger. For, you must know, the Force of inbred Infolence and ill Manners is not diminished, though it acquire a new Determination, from the fashionable Custom of calling Men to account for their Behaviour. Hence you may often fee one of these tame Bullies ready to burst with Pride and ill Humour. which he dares not vent, till a Parson has come in the way to his Relief. And the Man of Raillery, who would as foon bite off his Tongue, as break a Jest on the Profession of Arms, in the Presence of a military Man, shall instantly brighten up, and assume a familiar Air with Religion and the Church before Ecclefiaftics. Dorcon, who passes for a Poltron and stupid in all other Company, and really is fo, when he is got among Clergymen, affects a quite opposite Character. And many Dorcons there are, which owe their Wit and Courage to this Paffive Order.

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XIV. ALC. But to return to the Point in hand, can you deny, the old Romans were as famous for Justice and Integrity,

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DIAL as Men in these Days for the contrary Qualities? CRI. The Character of the Romans is not to be taken from the Sentiments of Tully, or Cato's Actions, or a shining Passage here and there in their History, but from the prevailing Tenor of their Lives and Notions. Now if they and our modern Britons are weighed in this same equal Balance, you will, if I mistake not, appear to have been prejudiced in favour of the old Romans against your own Country: probably because it professeth Christianity. Whatever Instances of Fraud or Injustice may be seen in Christians carry their own Censure with them, in the Care that is taken to conceal them, and the Shame that attends their Discovery. There is, even at this Day, a fort of Modesty in all our publick Councils and Deliberations. And I believe, the boldest of our Minute Philosophers would hardly undertake in a popular Affembly, to propose any Thing parallel to the Rape of the Sabines, the most unjust Usage of Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus, or the ungrateful Treatment of Camillus, which, as a learned Father observes, were Instances of Iniquity agreed to by the public Body of the Romans. And if Rome in her early Days were

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were capable of fuch flagrant Injustice, DIAL. it is most certain she did not mend her Manners, as she grew great in Wealth and Empire, having produced Monsters in every Kind of Wickedness, as far exceeding other Men, as they furpaffed them in Power. I freely acknowledge, the Christian Religion hath not had the fame Influence upon the Nation, that it would in case it had been always profesfed in its Purity, and cordially believed by all Men. But I will venture to fay, that if you take the Roman History from one End to the other, and impartially compare it with our own, you will neither find them fo good, nor your Countrymen fo bad as you imagine. On the contrary, an indifferent Eye may, I verily think, perceive a Vein of Charity and Justice, the Effect of Christian Principles, run through the latter; which, though not equally discernible in all Parts, yet discloseth it self sufficiently to make a wide Difference upon the whole, in spite of the general Appetites and Paffions of Humane Nature, as well as of the particular Hardness and Roughness of the Block, out of which we were hewn. And it is observable (what the Roman Authors themselves often suggest) even

V. Actions rose and fell with a Sense of Providence and a future State, and a Philosophy the nearest to the Christian Religion.

XV. Crito having spoke thus, paused. But Alciphron addressing himself to Euphranor and me, said, It is natural for Men, according to their several Educations and Prejudices, to form contrary Judgments upon the same Things, which they view in very different Lights. Crito, for instance, imagines that none but Salutary Effects proceed from Religion: on the other hand, if you appeal to the general Experience and Observation of other Men, you shall find it grown into a Proverb that Religion is the Root of Evil.

Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum.

And this is not only among Epicureans or other ancient Heathens, but among Moderns speaking of the Christian Religion. Now methinks it is unreasonable to oppose against the general concurring Opinion of the World, the Observation of a particular Person, or particular Set of Zealots, whose Prejudice sticks close to them, and ever

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ever mixeth with their Judgment; and DIAL. who read, collect, and observe with an Eye not to discover the Truth, but to defend their Prejudice. CRI. Though I cannot think with Alciphron, yet I must own, I admire his Address and Dexterity in Argument. Popular and general Opinion is by him represented, on certain Occasions, to be a fure Mark of Error. But when it ferves his Ends that it should feem otherwife, he can as eafily make it a Character of Truth. But it will by no means follow, that a profane Proverb used by the Friends and admired Authors of a Minute Philosopher, must therefore be a received Opinion, much less a Truth grounded on the Experience and Observation of Mankind. Sadness may spring from Guilt or Superstition, and Rage from Bigotry: But Darkness might as well be supposed the natural Effect of Sunshine, as fullen and furious Passions to proceed from the glad Tidings and divine Precepts of the Gospel. What is the Sum and Substance, Scope and End of Christ's Religion, but the Love of God and Man? To which all other Points and Duties are relative and subordinate, as Parts or Means, as Signs, Principles, Motives, or Effects. Now I would fain know, how it is poffible

DIAL fible for Evil or Wickedness of any kind to fpring from fuch a Source. I will not pretend, there are no evil Qualities in Christians, nor good in Minute Philosophers. But this I affirm, that whatever Evil is in us, our Principles certainly lead to Good: and whatever Good there may be in you, it is most certain your Principles lead to Evil.

> XVI. ALC. It must be owned there is a fair Outfide, and many plaufible Things may be faid, for the Christian Religion taken simply as it lies in the Gospel. But it is the Observation of one of our great Writers, that the first Christian Preachers very cunningly began with the fairest Face and the best moral Doctrines in the World. It was all Love, Charity, Meekness, Patience and so forth. But when by this means they had drawn over the World and got Power, they foon changed their Appearance, and shewed Cruelty, Ambition, Avarice, and every bad Quality. CRI. That is to fay, some Men very cunningly preached and underwent a world of Hardships, and laid down their Lives to propagate the best Principles and the best Morals, to the end that others fome Centuries after might reap the Benefit of bad

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ones. Whoever may be cunning, there is DIAL. not much Cunning in the Maker of this Observation. ALC. And yet ever fince this Religion hath appeared in the World, we have had eternal Feuds, Factions, Maffacres and Wars, the very Reverse of that Hymn with which it is introduced in the Gospel: Glory be to God on high, on Earth Peace, Good-will towards Men. CRI. This I will not deny. I will even own, that the Gospel and the Christian Religion have been often the Pretexts for these Evils: but it will not thence follow they were the On the contrary it is plain, they could not be the real proper Cause of these Evils; because a rebellious, proud, revengeful, quarrelsome Spirit is directly opposite to the whole Tenor and most express Precepts of Christianity: a Point so clear that I shall not prove it. And secondly, because all those Evils you mention were as frequent, nay, much more frequent, before the Christian Religion was known in the World. They are the common Product of the Passions and Vices of Mankind, which are fometimes covered with the Masque of Religion by wicked Men, having the Form of Godliness without the Power of it. This Truth feems fo plain, that I am surprised how

DIAL any Man of Sense, Knowledge, and Can-V. dour can make a Doubt of it.

> XVII. Take but a View of Heathen Rome; what a Scene is there of Faction and Fury and civil Rage? Let any Man confider the perpetual Feuds between the Patricians and Plebeians, the bloody and inhumane Factions of Marius and Sylla, Cinna and Octavius, and the wast havoc of Mankind, during the two famous Triumvirates. To be short, let any Man of common Candour and common Sense but cast an Eye, from one End to the other of the Roman Story, and behold that long Scene of Seditions, Murders, Maffacres, Proscriptions and Desolations of every kind, enhanced by every cruel Circumstance of Rage, Rapine, and Revenge; and then fay, whether those Evils were introduced into the World with the Christian Religion, or whether they are not less frequent now than before? ALC. The ancient Romans, it must be owned, had a high and fierce Spirit, which produced eager Contentions and very bloody Catastrophes. The Greeks, on the other hand, were a polite and gentle Sort of Men, foftened by Arts and Philosophy. It is impossible to think of the little States and

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and Cities of Greece, without wishing to DIAL. have lived in those Times, without admiring their Policy and envying their Happiness. CRI. Men are apt to consider the dark Sides of what they possess, and the bright ones of Things out of their Reach. A fine Climate, elegant Tafte, polite Amusements, Love of Liberty, and a most ingenious inventive Spirit for Arts and Sciences were indisputable Prerogatives of ancient Greece. But as for Peace and Quietness, Gentleness and Humanity, I think we have plainly the Advantage: For those envied Cities composed of gentle Greeks were not without their Factions, which persecuted each other with such Treachery, Rage, and Malice, that in respect of them our factious Folk are meer Lambs. To be convinced of this Truth, you need only look into Thucydides *; where you will find those Cities in general involved in fuch bitter Factions, as for Fellow-Citizens without the Formalities of War, to murder one another, even in their Senate-houses and their Temples; no regard being had to Merit, Rank, Obligation, or Nearness of Blood. And if Humane Nature boiled up to fo vehement a Pitch in the politest People, what

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^{*} Thucyd. 1. 3.

DIAL. wonder that Savage Nations should scalp, roaft, torture, and destroy each other, as they are known to do? It is therefore plain, that without Religion there would not be wanting Pretexts for Quarrels and Debates; all which can very eafily be accounted for by the natural Infirmities and Corruption of Men. It would not perhaps be so easy to account for the Blindness of those, who impute the most hellish Effects to the most divine Principle, if they could be supposed in earnest, and to have confidered the Point. One may daily fee ignorant and prejudiced Men make the most absurd Blunders: But that Freethinkers, Divers to the Bottom of Things, Fair Inquirers, and Openers of Eyes should be capable of fuch a gross Mistake, is what one would not expect.

> XVIII. ALC. The rest of Mankind we could more eafily give up: but as for the Greeks, Men of the most refined Genius express an high Esteem of them: not only on account of those Qualities which you think fit to allow them, but also for their Virtues. CRI. I shall not take upon me to fay how far some Men may be prejudiced against their Country, or whether others may not be prejudiced in

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and ha favour of it. But upon the fullest and DIAL. most equal Observation that I am able to make, it is my Opinion, that, if by Virtue is meant Truth, Justice, Gratitude, there is incomparably more Virtue, now at this Day in England, than at any Time could be found in ancient Greece. Thus much will be allowed, that we know few Countries, if any, where Men of eminent Worth, and famous for deferving well of the Public, met with harder Fate, and were more ungratefully treated than in the most polite and learned of the Grecian States. Though Socrates, it must be owned, would not allow, that those Statesmen, by adorning the City, augmenting the Fleet, or extending the Commerce of Athens, deserved well of their Country; or could with Justice complain of the ungrateful Returns made by their Fellow-Citizens, whom, while they were in Power, they had taken no Care to make better Men, by improving and cultivating their Minds with the Principles of Virtue, which if they had done, they needed not to have feared their Ingratitude. If I were to declare my Opinion, what gave the chief Advantage to Greeks and Romans, and other Nations, which have made the greatest Figure in the World,

DIAL. World, I should be apt to think it was a peculiar Reverence for their respective Laws and Institutions, which inspired them with Steadiness and Courage, and that hearty generous Love of their Country: by which they did not meerly understand a certain Language or Tribe of Men, much less a particular Spot of Earth, but included a certain System of Manners, Customs, Notions, Rites, and Laws Civil and Religious. ALC. Oh! I perceive your Drift, you would have us reverence the Laws and Religious Institutions of our Country. But herein we beg to be excused, if we do not think fit to imitate the Greeks, or to be governed by any Authority whatsoever. CRI. So far from it. If Mahometanism were established by Authority, I make no doubt, those very Free-thinkers, who at present applaud Turkish Maxims and Manners to that Degree you'd think them ready to turn Turks, would then be the first to exclaim against them. ALC. But to return: As for Wars and Factions, I grant they ever were and ever will be in the World upon some Pretext or other, as long as Men are Men.

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XIX. But there is a fort of War and DIAL. Warriors peculiar to Christendom, which the Heathens had no Notion of: I mean' Disputes in Theology and Polemical Divines, which the World hath been wonderfully peftered with: these Teachers of Peace, Meekness, Concord, and what not! if you take their word for it: But; if you cast an Eye upon their Practice, you find them to have been in all Ages the most contentious, quarrelsome, difagreeing Crew that ever appeared upon Earth. To observe the Skill and Sophiftry, the Zeal and Eagerness, with which those Barbarians, the School-Divines, split Hairs, and contest about Chimæra's, gives me more Indignation, as being more abfurd and a greater Scandal to Humane Reason, than all the ambitious Intrigues, Cabals, and Politics of the Court of Rome. CRI. If Divines are quarrelfome, that is not fo far forth as Divine, but as Undivine and Unchristian. Justice is a good thing; and the Art of Healing is excellent; nevertheless in the administring of Justice or Physic Men may be wronged or poisoned. But as Wrong cannot be Justice, or the Effect of Justice, so Poison cannot be Medicine or the Effect of Medicine, so neither can Pride or Strife be VOL. I.

DIAL. Religion or the Effect of Religion. ving premised this, I acknowledge, you may often see hot-headed Bigots engage themselves in religious as well as civil Parties, without being of Credit or Service to either. And as for the Schoolmen in particular, I do not in the least think the Christian Religion concerned in the Defence of them, their Tenets, or their Method of handling them: but, whatever Futility there may be in their Notions, or Inelegancy in their Language, in pure Justice to Truth one must own: they neither banter, nor rail, nor declaim in their Writings, and are so far from shewing Fury or Passion, that perhaps an impartial Judge will think: the Minute Philosophers are by no means to be compared with them, for keeping close to the Point, or for Temper and good Manners. But after all, if Men are puzzled, wrangle, talk Nonfense, and quarrel about Religion: so they do about Law, Physic, Politics, and every thing else of moment. I ask whether in these Professions, or in any other, where Men have refined and abstracted, they do not run into Disputes, Chicane, Nonsense, and Contradictions, as well as in Divinity? And yet this doth not hinder but there may be many excellent Rules, and

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gio See and just Notions, and useful Truths in all DIAL. those Professions. In all Disputes Humane V. Passions too often mix themselves, in proportion as the Subject is conceived to be more or less important. But we ought not to confound the Cause of Man with the Cause of God, or make Humane Follies an Objection to Divine Truths. It is easy to distinguish what looks like Wisdom from above, and what proceeds from the Passion and Weakness of Men. This is so clear a Point, that one would be tempted to think, the not doing it was an Effect, not of Ignorance, but, of something worse.

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XX. The Conduct we object to Minute Philosophers is a natural Consequence of their Principles. Whatfoever they can reproach us with is an Effect, not of our Principles, but of Humane Passion and Frailty. ALC. This is admirable. we must no longer object to Christians the absurd Contentions of Councils, the Cruelty of Inquisitions, the Ambition and Ufurpations of Churchmen. CRI. You may object them to Christians, but not to Christianity. If the Divine Author of our Religion, and his Disciples, have sowed a good Seed; and together with this good Seed, X 2 the

DIAL the Enemies of his Gospel (among whom are to be reckoned the Minute Philosophers of all Ages) have fowed bad Seeds, whence fpring Tares and Thistles; is it not evident, these bad Weeds cannot be imputed to the good Seed, or to those who fowed it? Whatever you do or can object against Ecclefiastical Tyranny, Usurpation, or Sophistry, may, without any Blemish or Disadvantage to Religion, be acknowledged by all true Christians: provided still that you impute those wicked Effects to their true Cause, not blaming any Principles or Persons for them, but those that really produce or justify them. Certainly, as the Interests of Christianity are not to be supported by unchristian Methods, whenever these are made use of, it must be supposed there is some other latent Principle which fets them at work. If the very Court of Rome hath been known, from Motives of Policy, to oppose settling the Inquisition in a Kingdom, where the fecular Power hath endeavoured to introduce it in spite of that Court *: We may well suppose, that elsewhere Factions of State, and Political Views of Princes, have given birth to Transactions seemingly religious, wherein at bottom neither Reli

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^{*} P. Paolo istoria dell' Inquisizione, p. 42.

ligion, nor Church, nor Churchmen, were DIAL. at all confider'd. As no Man of common Sense and Honesty will engage in a general Defence of Ecclefiaftics, fo I think no Man of common Candour can condemn them in general. Would you think it reafonable to blame all Statesmen, Lawyers, or Soldiers, for the Faults committed by those of their Profession, though in other Times, or in other Countries, and influenced by other Maxims and other Difcipline? And if not, why do you measure with one Rule to the Clergy, and another to the Laity? Surely the best Reason that can be given for this is Prejudice. Should any Man rake together all the Mischiefs that have been committed in all Ages and Nations, by Soldiers and Lawyers, you would, I suppose, conclude from thence; not that the State should be deprived of those useful Professions, but only that their Exorbitances should be guarded against and punished. If you took the same equitable Course with the Clergy, there would indeed be less to be faid against you: but then you would have much less to fay. This plain obvious Confideration, if every one who read confidered, would lessen the Credit of your Declaimers, ALC. But when all is faid that can be faid, it must X 3 move

DIAL move a Man's Indignation to fee reasonable Creatures, under the Notion of Study and Learning, employ'd in reading and writing fo many voluminous Tracts, de lana caprina. CRI. I shall not undertake the Vindication of Theological Writings, a general Defence being as needless as a general Charge is groundless. Only let them speak for themselves: and let no Man condemn them upon the Word of a Minute Philosopher. But we will imagine the very worst, and suppose a wrangling Pedant in Divinity disputes and ruminates and writes upon a refined Point, as useless and unintelligible as you please. Suppose this fame Person bred a Layman, might he not have employ'd himself in tricking Bargains, vexatious Law-fuits, Factions, Seditions, and fuch like Amusements, with much more Prejudice to the Publick? Suffer then curious Wits to spin Cobwebs: Where is the Hurt? ALC. The Mischief is, what Men want in Light they commonly make up in Heat: Zeal, and Ill-nature, being Weapons constantly exerted by the Partisans, as well as Champions, on either Side: And those perhaps not mean Pedants or Book-worms. You shall often see even the learned and eminent Divine lay himfelf out in explaining Things inexplicable,

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ble, or contend for a barren Point of The-DIAL. ory, as if his Life, Liberty, or Fortune were at stake. CRI. No doubt all Points in Divinity are not of equal Moment. Some may be too fine spun, and others have more Stress laid on them than they deserve. Be the Subject what it will, you shall often observe that a Point by being controverted, fingled out, examined, and nearly inspected, groweth considerable to the same Eye, that, perhaps, would have overlooked it in a large and comprehensive View. Nor is it an uncommon thing, to behold Ignorance and Zeal united in Men. who are born with a Spirit of Party, though the Church or Religion have in Truth but small Share in it. Nothing is easier than to make a Caricatura (as the Painters call it) of any Profession upon Earth: But at bottom, there will be found nothing fo strange in all this Charge upon the Clergy, as the Partiality of those who censure them, in supposing the common Defects of Mankind peculiar to their Order, or the Effect of religious Principles. ALC. Other Folks may dispute or squabble as they please, and no body mind them: but it feems, these venerable Squabbles of the Clergy pass for Learning, and interest Mankind. To use the Words of

DIAL the most ingenious Characterizer of our Times, "A Ring is made, and Readers ga-"ther in abundance. Every one takes " Party and encourages his own Side. This " shall be my Champion! This Man for " my Money! Well hit on our Side! Again " a good Stroke! There he was even with " him! Have at him the next Bout! Ex-" cellent Sport! *" CRI. Methinks I trace the Man of Quality and Breeding in this delicate Satyr, which fo politely ridicules those Arguments, Answers, Defences, and Replications which the Press groans under. ALC. To the infinite waste of Time and Paper, and all the while no body is one whit the wifer. And who indeed can be the wifer for reading Books upon Subjects quite out of the way, incomprehensible, and most wretchedly written? What Man of Sense or Breeding would not abhor the Infection of prolix Pulpit Eloquence, or of that dry, formal, pedantic, stiff, and clumfy Style, which fmells of the Lamp and the College.

XXI. They who have the Weakness to reverence the Universities as Seats of Learning, must needs think this a strange Reproach; but it is a very just one. For

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the most ingenious Men are now agreed, DIAL. that they are only Nurseries of Prejudice, Corruption, Barbarism, and Pedantry. LYS. For my part, I find no Fault with All I know is, that I had Univerfities. the spending three hundred Pounds a Year in one of them, and think it the chearfullest time of my Life. As for their Books and Style I had not Leifure to mind them. CRI. Whoever hath a mind to weed, will never want Work: and he that shall pick out bad Books on every Subject will foon fill his Library. I do not know what Theological Writings Alciphron and his Friends may be conversant in: but I will venture to fay, one may find among our English Divines many Writers, who for Compass of Learning, Weight of Matter, Strength of Argument, and Purity of Style, are not inferior to any in our Language. It is not my Defign to apologize for the Universities: whatever is amiss in them (and what is there perfect among Men?) I heartily wish amended. But I dare affirm, because I know it to be true, that any impartial Observer, although they should not come up to what in Theory he might wish or imagine, will nevertheless find them much superior to those that in Fact are to be found in other Countries,

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DIAL and far beyond the mean Picture that is drawn of them by Minute Philosophers. It is natural for those to rail most at Places of Education, who have profited least by them. Weak and fond Parents will also readily impute to a wrong Cause, those Corruptions themselves have occasion'd, by allowing their Children more Money than they knew how to fpend innocently. And too often a Gentleman, who has been idle at the College and kept idle Company, will judge of a whole University from his own Cabal. ALC. Crito mistakes the Point. I vouch the Authority, not of a Dunce, or a Rake, or abfurd Parent, but of the most consummate Critic this Age has produced. This great Man characterizeth Men of the Church and Universities with the finest Touches and most masterly Pencil. What do you think he calls them? EUPH. What? ALC. Why, the black Tribe, Magicians, Formalists, Pedants, bearded Boys: and, having fufficiently derided and exploded them and their mean ungenteel Learning, he fets most admirable Models of his own for good Writing: And it must be acknowledged they are the finest things in our Language; as I could eafily convince you,

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noble Writer about me. EUPH. He is DIAL. then a noble Writer. ALC. I tell you he V. is a Nobleman. EUPH. But a Nobleman who writes is one thing, and a noble Writer another. ALC. Both Characters are coincident, as you may fee.

XXII. Upon which Alciphron pulled a Treatise out of his Pocket, entitled, A Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author. Would you behold, said he, looking round upon the Company, a noble Specimen of fine Writing: do but dip into this Book: which Crito opening read verbatim as follows *.

Where then are the Pleasures which Ambition

- And Love affords? How's the gay World enjoy'd?
- Or are those to be esteem'd no Pleasures.
- · Which are lost by Dulness and Inaction?
- But Indolence is the highest Pleasure.
- " To live and not to feel! To feel no Trouble.
- What Good then? Life it felf. And is
- · This properly to live? Is Sleeping Life?
- Is this what I should study to prolong?
- · Here the

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- Fantastic Tribe it self seems scandaliz'd.
- A Civil War begins: The major Part
 - * Part. 3. Sect. 2.

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DIAL. Of the capricious Dames do range themselves

V. On Reason's Side,

And declare against the languid Siren.

- · Ambition blushes at the offer'd Sweet.
- · Conceit and Vanity take Superior Airs.
- Ev'n Luxury ber self in ber polite
- · And elegant Humour reproves th' Apostate
- · Sifter.
- · And marks ber as an Alien to true Pleasure.
- · Away thou
- · Drowfy Phantome! Haunt me no more, for I
- · Have learn'd, from better than thy Sifterhood,
- · That Life and Happiness consist in Action
- · And Employment.
- But here a busy Form solicits us,
- · Active, industrious, watchful, and despising
- · Pains and Labour. She wears the serious
- · Countenance of Virtue, but with Features
- of Anxiety and Disquiet.
- What is't she mutters? What looks she on with
- · Such Admiration and Astonishment?
- Bags! Coffers! Heaps of Shining Metal! What?
- For the Service of Luxury? For her?
- · Thefe Preparations? Art thou then ber Friend,
- Grave Fancy! Is it for her thou toil'st?
- No, but for Provision against Want.
- But Luxury apart! tell me now,
- · Hast thou not already a Competence?
- 'Tis good to be secure against the Fear

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- 6 Of starving. Is there then no Death but this? DIAL.
- No other Passage out of Life? Are other Doors V.
- · Secur'd if this be bar'd? Say Avarice!
- · Thou emptiest of Phantomes, is it not vile
- Gowardise thou serv'st? What further have I then
- " To do with thee (thou doubly vile Dependent)
- When once I have dismist thy Patroness,
- And despised ber Threats?

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. Thus I contend with Fancy and Opinion.

Euphranor, having heard thus far, cried out: What! will you never have done with your Poetry? another time may ferve: But why should we break off our Conference to read a Play? You are miftaken, it is no Play nor Poetry, replied Alciphron, but a famous modern Critic moralizing in Profe. You must know this great Man hath (to use his own Words) revealed a Grand Arcanum to the World, having instructed Mankind in what he calls Mirrour-writing, Self-discourfing Practice, and Author Practice, and shew'd "That " by virtue of an intimate Recess, we " may discover a certain Duplicity of " Soul, and divide our Self into two Par-" ties, or (as he varies the Phrase) practi-" cally form the Dual Number."

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DIAL. consequence whereof he hath found out that a Man may argue with himself: and not only with himself, but also with Notions, Sentiments, and Vices, which by a marvellous Prosopopæia he converts into fo many Ladies: and fo converted, he confutes and confounds them in a Divine Can any thing be finer, bolder, or more fublime? EUPH. It is very wondrful. I thought indeed you had been reading a Piece of a Tragedy. Is this he who despiseth our Universities, and sets up for reforming the Style and Taste of the Age? ALC. The very fame. This is the admired Critic of our Times. Nothing can stand the Test of his correct Judgment, which is equally fevere to Poets and Parfons. " The British Muses (saith this " great Man) lifp as in their Cradles: " and their stammering Tongues, which " nothing but Youth and Rawness can " excuse, have hitherto spoken in wretch-" ed Pun and Quibble. Our Dramatic " Shakespear, our Fletcher, Johnson, and " our Epique Milton preserve this Style. " And, according to him, even our later " Authors aiming at a false Sublime, en-" tertain our raw Fancy and unpractifed " Ear, which has not yet had leifure to " form it felf, and become truly mufical." $EUPH_{\epsilon}$

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EUPH. Pray what Effect may the Lef-DIAL. fons of this great Man, in whose Eyes our learned Professors are but bearded Boys. and our most celebrated Wits but wretched Punsters, have had upon the Public? Hath he rubbed off the College Ruft, cured the Rudeness and Rawness of our Authors, and reduced them to his own Attic Standard? Do they aspire to his true Sublime, or imitate his chaste unaffected Style? ALC. Doubtless the Taste of the Age is much mended: in proof whereof his Writings are univerfally admired. When our Author published this Treatise, he foresaw the public Taste would improve apace: that Arts and Letters would grow to great Perfection: that there would be a happy Birth of Genius: of all which things he spoke, as he faith himself, in a prophetic Style. CRI. And yet notwithstanding the prophetical Predictions of this Critic, I do not find, any Science hath throve among us of late, fo much as the Minute Philosophy. In this kind, it must be confessed, we have had many notable Productions. But whether they are fuch Master-pieces for good Writing, I leave to be determined by their Readers.

XXIII. In the mean time, I must beg to be excused, if I cannot believe your great DIAL. great Man on his bare Word; when he would have us think, that Ignorance and ill Tafte are owing to the Christian Religion or the Clergy, it being my fincere Opinion, that whatever Learning or Knowledge we have among us, is derived from that Order. If those, who are so fagacious at discovering a Mote in other Eyes, would but purge their own, I believe they might eafily fee this Truth. For what but Religion could kindle and preserve a Spirit towards Learning, in such a Northern rough People? Greece produced Men of active and subtile Genius. The public Conventions and Æmulations of their Cities forwarded that Genius: And their natural Curiofity was amused and excited by learned Conversations, in their public Walks, and Gardens, and Porticos. Our Genius leads to Amusements of a groffer Kind: we breathe a groffer and a colder Air: and that Curiofity which was general in the Athenians, and the gratifying of which was their chief Recreation, is among our People of Fashion treated like Affectation, and as fuch banished from polite Assemblies and Places of Refort: and without doubt would in a little time be banished the Country: if it were not for the great Reservoirs of Learn-

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Learning, where those Formalists, Pedants, DIAL. and bearded Boys, as your profound Critic calls them, are maintained by the Liberality and Piety of our Predecessors. For it is as evident that Religion was the Cause of those Seminaries, as it is that they are the Cause or Source of all the Learning and Taste which is to be found, even in those very Men who are the declared Enemies of our Religion and publick Foundations. Every one, who knows any thing, knows we are indebted for our Learning to the Greek and Latin Tongues. This those severe Censors will readily grant. Perhaps they may not be so ready to grant, what all Men must see, that we are indebted for those Tongues to our Religion. What elfe could have made foreign and dead Languages in fuch Request among us? What could have kept in being and handed them down to our Times, through fo many dark Ages in which the World was wasted and disfigured by Wars and Violence? What, but a regard to the Holy Scriptures, and Theological Writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church? And in fact, do we not find that the Learning of those Times was folely in the Hands of Ecclefiastics; that they alone lighted the Lamp in Succesfion

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V. it down to After-ages; and that ancient
Books were collected and preferred in
their Colleges and Seminaries, when all
Love and Remembrance of polite Arts
and Studies was extinguished among the
Laity, whose Ambition intirely turned to
Arms?

XXIV. ALC. There is, I must needs fay, one Sort of Learning undoubtedly of Christian Original, and peculiar to the Universities; where our Youth spend several Years in acquiring that mysterious Jargon of Scholasticism; than which there could never have been contrived a more effectual Method, to perplex and confound Humane Understanding. It is true, Gentlemen are untaught by the World what they have been taught at the College: but then their Time is doubly loft. CRI. But what if this Scholastic Learning was not of Christian but of Mahometan Original, being derived from the Arabs? And what if this Grievance of Gentlemens spending several Years in learning and unlearning this Jargon, be all Grimace and a Specimen only of the Truth and Candour of certain Minute Philosophers, who raise great Invectives from

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from flight Occasions, and judge too often DIAL. without inquiring. Surely it would be no fuch deplorable Loss of Time, if a young Gentleman spent a few Months upon that so much despised and decried Art of Logic, a Surfeit of which is by no means the prevailing Nusance of this Age. It is one Thing to waste one's Time in learning and unlearning the barbarous Terms, wiredrawn Distinctions, and prolix Sophistry of the Schoolmen: and another to attain some Exactness in Defining and Arguing: Things perhaps not altogether beneath the Dignity even of a Minute Philosopher. There was indeed a Time, when Logic was confidered as its own Object: And that Art of Reafoning, instead of being transferred to Things turned altogether upon Words and Abstractions: which produced a fort of Leprofy in all Parts of Knowledge, corrupting and converting them into hollow verbal Disputations in a most impure Dialect. But those Times are passed: and that which had been cultivated as the principal Learning for some Ages, is now confidered in another Light: and by no Means makes that Figure in the Univerfities, or bears that Part in the Studies of young Gentlemen educated there, which Y 2 is

DIAL is pretended by those admirable Reformers of Religion and Learning, the Minute Philosophers.

> XXV. But who are they that encouraged and produced the Restoration of Arts and polite Learning? What Share had the Minute Philosophers in this Affair? Matthias Corvinus King of Hungary, Alphonsus King of Naples, Cosmus de Medicis, Picus of Mirandula, and other Princes and great Men, famous for Learning themselves, and for encouraging it in others with a munificent Liberality, were neither Turks nor Gentiles nor Minute Philosophers. Who was it that transplanted and revived the Greek Language and Authors, and with them all polite Arts and Literature in the West? Was it not chiefly Bessarion a Cardinal, Marcus Musurus an Archbishop, Theodore Gaza a private Clergyman? Has there been a greater and more renowned Patron, and Restorer of elegant Studies in every kind, fince the Days of Augustus Casar, than Leo the tenth Pope of Rome? Did any Writers approach the Purity of the Clasfics nearer than the Cardinals Bembus and Sadoletus, or than the Bishops Jovius and Vida? not to mention an endless Number

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of ingenious Ecclefiaftics, who flourished DIAL. on the other Side of the Alpes in the Golden Age (as the Italians call it) of Leo the Tenth, and wrote, both in their own Language and the Latin, after the best Models of Antiquity. It is true, this first Recovery of Learning preceded the Reformation, and lighted the Way to it: But the Religious Controversies, which enfued, did wonderfully propagate and improve it in all Parts of Christendom. And furely, the Church of England is, at least, as well calculated for the Encouragement of Learning, as that of Rome. Experience confirms this Observation: and I believe the Minute Philosophers will not be so partial to Rome as to deny it. ALC. It is impossible your Account of Learning beyond the Alpes should be true. The noble Critic in my Hands, having complimented the French, to whom he allows fome good Authors, afferts of other Foreigners, particularly the Italians, " That they may be reckoned no better " than the Corrupters of true Learning " and Erudition." CRI. With fome Sorts of Critics, Dogmatical Censures and Conclusions are not always the Result of perfect Knowledge or exact Inquiry: And if they harangue upon Taste, Truth

DIAL. of Art, a just Piece, Grace of Style, Attic Elegance, and fuch Topics, they are to be understood only as those that would fain talk themselves into Reputation for Courage. To hear Thrasymachus speak of Resentment, Duels, and Point of Honour, one would think him ready to burst with Valour. LYS. Whatever Merit this Writer may have as a Demolisher, I always thought he had very little as a Builder. It is natural for careless Writers to run into Faults they never think of: But for an exact and fevere Critic to shoot his Bolt at Random, is unpardonable. If he, who professes at every Turn an high Esteem for polite Writing, should yet despise those who most excel in it; one would be tempted to suspect his Taste. But if the very Man, who of all Men talks most about Art and Taste, and critical Skill, and would be thought to have most considered those Points, should often deviate from his own Rules, into the false Sublime or the mauvaise Plaisanterie; What reasonable Man would follow the Taste and Judgment of such a Guide, or be seduced to climb the steep Ascent, or tread in the rugged Paths of Virtue on his Recommendation?

XXVI. ALC.

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XXVI. ALC. But to return, methinks DIAL. Crito makes no Compliment to the Genius of his Country, in supposing that Englishmen might not have wrought out of themselves, all Art and Science and good Taste; without being beholden to Church, or Universities, or ancient Languages. CRI. What might have been is only Conjecture. What has been, it is not difficult to know. That there is a Vein in Britain, of as rich an Ore as ever was in any Country, I will not deny: but it lies deep, and will cost Pains to come at: And extraordinary Pains require an extraordinary Motive. As for what lies next the Surface, it feems but indifferent, being neither so good nor in such Plenty as in fome other Countries. It was the Comparison of an ingenious Florentine, that the celebrated Poems of Taffo and Ariofto are like two Gardens, the one of Cucumbers, the other of Melons. In the one you shall find few bad, but the best are not a very good Fruit: in the other much the greater Part are good for nothing, but those that are good are excellent. Perhaps the fame Comparison may hold, between the English and some of their Neighbours. ALC. But suppose we should grant that the Christian Religion and its Seminaries might

DIAL. might have been of Use, in preserving or retrieving polite Arts and Letters: what then? Will you make this an Argument of its Truth? CRI. I will make it an Argument of Prejudice and Ingratiude in those Minute Philosophers, who object Darkness, Ignorance, and Rudeness, as an Effect of that very Thing, which above all others hath enlightened and civilized and embellished their Country: which is as truly indebted to it for Arts and Sciences (which nothing but Religion was ever known to have planted in fuch a Latitude) as for that general Sense of Virtue and Humanity, and the Belief of a Providence and Future State, which all the Augmentation of Minute Philosophers hath not yet been able to abolish.

XXVII. ALC. It is strange you should still persist to argue, as if all the Gentlemen of our Sect were Enemies to Virtue, and downright Atheists: Though I have assured you of the contrary, and that we have among us several, who profess themselves in the Interests of Virtue and Natural Religion, and have also declared, That I my self do now argue upon that Foot. CRI. How can you pretend, to be in the Interest of Natural Religion

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Religion, and yet be professed Enemies DIAL. of the Christian, the only established Religion which includes whatever is excellent in the Natural, and which is the only means of making those Precepts, Duties, and Notions, fo called, become reverenced throughout the World? Would not he be thought weak or infincere, who should go about to perfuade People, that he was much in the Interests of an Earthly Monarch; that he loved and admired his Government; when at the same Time he shewed himself on all Occasions, a most bitter Enemy of those very Persons and Methods, which above all others contributed most to his Service. and to make his Dignity known and revered, his Laws observed, or his Dominion extended? And is not this what Minute Philosophers do, while they set up for Advocates of God and Religion. and yet do all they can to discredit Christians and their Worship? It must be owned, indeed, that you argue against Christianity, as the Cause of Evil and Wickedness in the World: but with fuch Arguments, and in such a manner as might equally prove the fame Thing of civil Government, of Meat and Drink. of every Faculty and Profession, of Learning,

DIALling, of Eloquence, and even of Humane Reason it self. After all, even those of your Sect who allow themselves to be called Deifts, if their Notions are thoroughly examined, will, I fear, be found to include little of Religion in them. As for the Providence of God watching over the Conduct of Humane Agents and difpenfing Bleffings or Chaftisements, the Immortality of the Soul, a final Judgment, and future State of Rewards and Punishments; how few, if any, of your Free-thinkers have made it their Endeavour to possess Mens Minds with a serious Sense of those great Points of Natural Religion! How many, on the contrary, endeavour to render the Belief of them doubtful or ridiculous! It must be owned, there may be found Men that, without any regard to these Points, make fome Pretence to Religion: But who can think them in earnest? You shall sometimes see, the very Ringleaders of Vice and Profaneness write like Men, that would be thought to have Virtue and Piety at Heart. This may perhaps prove them inconsistent Writers, but can never prove them to be innocent. When a Man's declared Principles and peculiar Tenets are utterly fubverfive of those things; whatever such a one saith of Virtue, Piety, and

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and Religion, will be understood as meer DIAL. Difcretion and Compliance with common Forms. LYS. To speak the Truth, I, for my part, had never any liking to Religion of any kind, either revealed or unrevealed: And I dare venture to fay the same for those Gentlemen of our Sect that I am acquainted with, having never observed them guilty of so much meanness, as even to mention the Name of God with Reverence, or speak with the least Regard of Piety or any fort of Worship. There may, perhaps, be found one or two formal Pretenders to Enthusiasm and Devotion, in the way of Natural Religion, who laughed at Christians for publishing Hymns and Meditations, while they plagued the World with as bad of their own: But the sprightly Men make a Jest of all this. It seems to us meer Pedantry. Sometimes, indeed, in good Company one may hear a Word dropt in Commendation of Honour and the former of Good-nature: But these, by Connoisseurs, is always understood to mean nothing but Fashion: as the latter is nothing but Temper and Constitution, which guides a Man just as Appetite doth a Brute.

XXVIII. And

DIAL. XXVIII. And after all these Argu-

ments and Notions, which beget one another without End, to take the Matter short: neither I nor my Friends for our Souls could ever comprehend, why Man might not do very well, and govern himself without any Religion at all, as well as a Brute which is thought the fillier Creature of the two. Have Brutes Instincts, Senses, Appetites, and Passions, to steer and conduct them? So have Men, and Reason over and above to confult upon occasion. From these Premises we conclude, the Road of Humane Life is fufficiently lighted without Religion. CRI. Brutes having but small Power, limited to Things present or particular, are fufficiently opposed and kept in Order, by the Force or Faculties of other Animals and the Skill of Man, without Conscience or Religion: But Conscience is a necessary Balance to Humane Reason, a Faculty of such mighty Extent and Power, especially toward Mischief. Besides, other Animals are, by the Law of their Nature, determined to one certain End or Kind of Being, without Inclination or Means either to deviate or go beyond it. But Man hath in him a Will and higher Principle; by by ren fal nat he Re gra Br pro int lon kn Kr and cip COL

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tha nic by virtue whereof he may pursue diffe-DIAL. rent or even contrary Ends; and either fall short of or exceed the Perfection natural to his Species in this World; as he is capable, either by giving up the Reins to his fenfual Appetites, of degrading himself into the Condition of Brutes, or else, by well ordering and improving his Mind, of being transformed into the Similitude of Angels. Man alone of all Animals hath Understanding to know his God. What availeth this Knowledge unless it be to ennoble Man. and raise him to an Imitation and Participation of the Divinity? Or what could fuch Ennoblement avail if to end with this Life? Or how can these Things take effect without Religion? But the Points of Vice and Virtue, Man and Beaft, Sense and Intellect, have been already at large canvassed. What! Lysicles, would you have us go back where we were three or four Days ago? LYS. By no means: I had much rather go forward, and make an End as foon as possible. But to fave Trouble, give me Leave to tell you once for all, that, fay what you can, you shall never persuade me so many ingenious agreeable Men are in the wrong, and

DIAL and a Pack of fnarling four Bigots in the right.

CRI.

S XXIX. O Lysicles, I neither look for Religion among Bigots, nor Reason among Libertines; each Kind difgrace their feveral Pretenfions; the one owning no regard even to the plainest and most important Truths, while the others exert an angry Zeal for Points of least Concern. And surely whatever there is of filly, narrow, and uncharitable in the Bigot, the same is in great Measure to be imputed to the conceited Ignorance, and petulant Profaneness of the Libertine. And it is not at all unlikely that as Libertines make Bigots, fo Bigots should make Libertines, the Extreme of one Party being ever observed to produce a contrary Extreme of another. And although, while these Adversaries draw the Rope of Contention, Reason and Religion are often called upon: yet are they perhaps very little confidered or concerned in the Contest. Lysicles, instead of answering Crito, turned short upon Alciphron. It was always my Opinion, faid he, that nothing could be fillier than to think of destroying Christianity, by crying up natural Religion. Whoever thinks highly of the one, can never, with any Confisten-

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cy, think meanly of the other; it being DIAL. very evident, that Natural Religion, without Revealed, never was nor never can be established or received any where, but in the Brains of a few idle speculative Men. I was aware what your Concessions would come to. The Belief of God, Virtue, a Future State, and fuch fine Notions are, as every one may fee with half an Eye, the very Basis and Corner-Stone of the Christian Religion. Lay but this Foundation for them to build on, and you shall foon fee what Superstructures our Men of Divinity will raise from it. The Truth and Importance of those Points once admitted, a Man need be no Conjurer to prove, upon that Principle, the Excellency and Usefulness of the Christian Religion: And then to be fure, there must be Priests to teach and propagate this useful Religion. And if Priests, a regular Subordination without doubt in this worthy Society, and a Provision for their Maintenance: fuch as may enable them to perform all their Rites and Ceremonies with Decency, and keep their facred Character above Contempt. And the plain Consequence of all this is a Confederacy between the Prince and the Priesthood to subdue the People: So we have

DIAL. have let in at once upon us, a long Train of Ecclefiaftical Evils, Priestcraft, Hierarchy, Inquisition. We have lost our Liberty and Property, and put the Nation to vast Expence, only to purchase Bridles and Saddles for their own Backs.

> XXX. This being fpoke with fome Sharpness of Tone, and an upbraiding Air, touched Alciphron to the quick, who replied nothing, but shewed Confusion in his Looks. Crito smiling look'd at Euphranor and me, then casting an Eye on the two Philosophers, spoke as follows If I may be admitted to interpose good Offices, for preventing a Rupture between old Friends and Brethren in Opinion, I would observe, that in this Charge of Lysicles there is something right and fomething wrong. It feems right to affert as he doth, that the real Belief of Natural Religion will lead a Man to approve of Revealed: But it is as wrong to affert, that Inquisitions, Tyranny, and Ruin must follow from thence. Your Free-thinkers, without Offence be it faid, feem to mistake their Talent. imagine strongly, but reason weakly; mighty at Exaggeration, and jejune in Argument!

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for the Fu gument! Can no Method be found, to re-DIAL. lieve them from the Terror of that fierce and bloody Animal, an English Parson? Will it not suffice to pare his Talons without chopping off his Fingers? Then they are fuch wonderful Patriots for Liberty and Property! When I hear these two Words in the Mouth of a Minute Philosopher, I am put in mind of the Teste di Ferro at Rome. His Holiness, it seems, not having Power to affign Pensions on Spanish Benefices to any but Natives of Spain, always keeps at Rome two Spaniards, called Teste di Ferro, who have the Name of all fuch Pensions, but not the Profit, which goes to Italians. As we may fee every Day, both Things and Notions placed to the Account of Liberty and Property, which in reality neither have nor are meant to have any Share in them. What! Is it impossible for a Man to be a Christian, but he must be a Slave? Or a Clergyman, but he must have the Principles of an Inquisitor? I am far from screening and justifying Appetite of Domination or Tyrannical Power in Ecclefiaftics. who have been guilty in that respect, have forely paid for it, and it is to be hoped they always will. But having laid the Fury and Folly of the ambitious Prelate, VOL. I. 18

DIAL is it not time to look about and fpy whether, on the other hand, some Evil may not possibly accrue to the State, from the overflowing Zeal of an Independent Whig? This I may affirm, without being at any pains to prove it, that the worst Tyranny this Nation ever felt was from the Hands of Patriots of that Stamp.

> XXXI. LYS. I don't know. Tyranny is a harsh Word, and sometimes misapplied. When spirited Men of independent Maxims create a Ferment, or make a Change in the State: He that loseth is apt to consider things in one Light, and he that wins in another. In the mean time this is certainly good Policy, that we should be frugal of our Money, and referve it for better Uses, than to expend on the Church and Religion. CRI. Surely the old Apologue of the Belly and Members need not be repeated to fuch knowing Men. It should feem as needless to observe, that all other States, which ever made any Figure in the World for Wisdom and Politeness, have thought Learning deserved Encouragement as well as the Sword: that Grants for religious Uses were as fitting as for Knights Service: and Foundations for propagating Piety, as necessary to the publick Wel-

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fare and Defence, as either Civil or Mili-DIAL. tary Establishments. In former Times, V. when the Clergy were a Body much more numerous, wealthy, and powerful: when in their State of Colibacy they gave no Pledges to the Public: when they enjoy'd great Exemptions and Privileges above their Fellow-Subjects: when they owned Obedience to a foreign Potentate: the Case was evidently and widely different from what it is in our Days. And the not difcerning, or not owning this Difference is no Proof either of Sagacity or Honesty in the Minute Philosophers. But I ask who are at this Expence, and what is this Expence so much complained of? LYS. As if you had never heard of Church-Lands and Tithes! CRI. But I would fain know, how they can be charged as an Expence, either upon the Nation or private Men. Where nothing is exported the Nation loseth nothing: and it is all one to the Publick, whether Money circulates at Home through the Hands of a Vicar or a Squire. Then as for private Men, who, for want of Thought, are full of Complaint about the Payment of Tithes; can any Man justly complain of it as a Tax, that he pays what never belonged to him? The Tenant rents his 7 2 Farm

DIAL. Farm with this Condition, and pays his Landlord proportionably less, than if his Farm had been exempt from it: So he loseth nothing; it being all one to him, whether he pays his Pastor or his Landlord. The Landlord cannot complain that he has not what he hath no Right to, either by Grant, Purchase, or Inheritance. This is the Case of Tithes: and as for the Church-Lands, he furely can be no Freethinker, nor any Thinker at all, who doth not see that no Man, whether Noble, Gentle, or Plebeian, hathany fort of Right or Claim to them, which he may not with equal Justice pretend to all the Lands in the Kingdom. LYS. At prefent indeed we have no Right, and that is our Complaint. CRI. You would have then what you have no Right to. LYS. Not fo neither: what we would have is first a Right convey'd by Law, and in the next place, the Lands by virtue of fuch Right. CRI. In order to this, it might be expedient in the first place, to get an Act passed for excommunicating from all Civil Rights every Man, that is a Christian, a Scholar, and wears a black Coat, as guilty of three capital Offences against the public Weal of this Realm. LYS. To deal frankly, I think it would be an excellent

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excellent good Act. It would provide at DIAL. once for feveral deferving Men, rare Artificers in Wit, and Argument, and Ridicule! who have, too many of them, but fmall Fortunes, with a great Arrear of Merit towards their Country, which they have fo long enlightened and adorned gratis. EUPH. Pray tell me, Lysicles, are not the Clergy legally possessed of their Lands and Emoluments? LYS. No. body denies it. EUPH. Have they not been possessed of them from Time immemorial? LYS. This too I grant EUPH. They claim then by Law and ancient Prefcription. LYS. They do. EUPH. Have the oldest Families of the Nobility a better Title? LYS. I believe not. It grieves me to fee fo many overgrown Estates in the Hands of ancient Families, on account of no other Merit, but what they brought with them into the World. EUPH. May you not then as well take their Lands too, and bestow them on the Minute Philosophers, as Persons of more Merit? LYS. So much the better. This enlarges our View, and opens a new Scene: It is very delightful in the Contemplation of Truth, to behold how one Theory grows out of another. ALC. Old Pætus used to fay, that if the Clergy were deprived Z_3

DIAL of their Hire, we should lose the most popular Argument against them. LYS. But so long as Men live by Religion, there will never be wanting Teachers and Writers in Defence of it. And how can you be fure they would be wanting, though they did not live by it, fince it is well known Christianity had its Defenders even when Men died by it? LYS. One thing I know: there is a rare Nursery of young Plants growing up, who have been carefully guarded against every Air of Prejudice, and sprinkled with the Dew of our choicest Principles: mean while, Wishes are wearisome: and to our infinite Regret nothing can be done, fo long as there remains any Prejudice in favour of old Customs and Laws and National Constitutions, which, at bottom, we very well know and can demonstrate to be only Words and Notions.

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XXXII. But, I can never hope, Crito, to make you think my Schemes reafonable. We reason each right upon his own Principles, and shall never agree till we quit our Principles, which cannot be done by reasoning. We all talk of Just, and Right, and Wrong, and Public Good and

and all those things. The Names may be DIAL. the fame, but the Notions and Conclufions very different, perhaps diametrically opposite: and yet each may admit of clear Proofs, and be inferred by the same way of reasoning. For Instance, the Gentlemen of the Club which I frequent, define Man to be a fociable Animal: Confequently, we exclude from this Definition all those Humane Creatures, of whom it may be faid, we had rather have their Room than their Company. fuch, though wearing the Shape of Man, are to be esteem'd in all account of Reafon, not as Men, but only as Humane Creatures. Hence it plainly follows, that Men of Pleasure, Men of Humour, and Men of Wit, are alone properly and truly to be confidered as Men. Whatever therefore conduceth to the Emolument of fuch, is for the Good of Mankind, and confequently very just and lawful, although feeming to be attended with Lofs or Damage to other Creatures: inafmuch as no real Injury can be done in Life or Property to those, who know not how to enjoy them. This we hold for clear and well connected Reasoning. But others may view things in another Light, affign different Definitions, draw other Infe-Z 4 rences.

V. suppose the Top and Flower of the Creation, only as a Wart or Excrescence of Humane Nature. From all which there must ensue a very different System of Morals, Politics, Rights, and Notions. CRI. If you have a mind to argue, we will argue: if you have more mind to jest, we will laugh with you. LYS.

Quid vetat?

This Partition of our Kind into Men and Humane Creatures, puts me in mind of another Notion broached by one of our Club, whom we used to call the Pythagorean.

XXXIII. He made a threefold Partition of the Humane Species, into Birds, Beafts, and Fishes, being of Opinion that the Road of Life lies upwards, in a perpetual Ascent through the Scale of Being: In such sort, that the Souls of Insects after Death make their second Appearance in the Shape of perfect Animals, Birds, Beafts, or Fishes; which upon their Death are preferred into Humane Bodies, and in the next Stage into Beings of a higher and more perfect Kind. This Man

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we confidered at first as a fort of Heretic: DIAL. because his Scheme seemed not to consist with our fundamental Tenet, the Mortality of the Soul: But he justified the Notion to be innocent, inafmuch as it included nothing of Reward or Punishment, and was not proved by any Argument, which supposed or implied either incorporeal Spirit, or Providence, being only inferred, by way of Analogy, from what he had observed in Humane Affairs, the Court, the Church, and the Army; wherein the Tendency is always upwards from lower Posts to higher. According to this System, the Fishes are those Men who swim in Pleasure, such as petits maitres, bons vivans, and honest Fellows. are dry, drudging, covetous, rapacious Folk, and all those addicted to Care and Bufiness like Oxen, and other dry Land Animals, which spend their Lives in Labour and Fatigue. The Birds are airy notional Men, Enthusiasts, Projectors, Philosophers, and such like: in each Species every Individual retaining a Tincture of his former State, which constitutes what is called Genius. If you ask me which Species of Humane Creatures I like best, I answer, The flying Fish: that is, a Man of animal Enjoyment, with

V. we have our Creeds and our Systems, as well as graver Folks: with this Difference, that they are not strait-laced, but sit easy, to be slipped off or on, as Humour or Occasion serves. And now I can, with the greatest Æquanimity imaginable, hear my Opinions argued against, or consuted.

XXXIV. ALC. It were to be wished all Men were of that Mind. But you shall find a fort of Men, whom I need not name, that cannot bear with the least Temper, to have their Opinions examined or their Faults censured. They are against Reason, because Reason is against them. For our parts, we are all for Liberty of Conscience. If our Tenets are absurd, we allow them to be freely argued and inspected: and by parity of Reason we might hope to be allowed the same Privilege, with respect to the Opinions of other Men. CRI. O Alciphron! Wares that will not bear the Light are justly to be suspected. Whatever therefore moves you to make this Complaint, take my Word I never will: But as hitherto I have allowed your Reason its full Scope, fo for the future I always shall. though

though I cannot approve of Railing or DIAL. Declaiming, not even in my felf, whenever you have shewed me the way to it: Yet this I will answer for, that you shall ever be allowed to reason as closely and as strenuously as you can. But for the Love of Truth, be candid, and do not fpend your Strength and our Time, in Points of no Significancy, or foreign to the Purpose, or agreed between us. We allow that Tyranny and Slavery are bad things: but why should we apprehend them from the Clergy at this Time? Rites and Ceremonies we own are not Points of chief moment in Religion: but why should we ridicule things in their own Nature, at least, Innocent, and which bear the Stamp of Supreme Authority? That Men in Divinity, as well as other Subjects, are perplexed with useless Disputes, and are like to be so as long as the World lasts, I freely acknowledge: But why must all the Humane Weakness and Mistakes of Clergymen be imputed to wicked Defigns? Why indifcriminately abuse their Character and Tenets? Is this like Candour, Love of Truth, and Free-thinking? It is granted there may be found, now and then, Spleen and Ill-breeding in the Clergy: But are not

DIAL, not the fame: Faults incident to English Laymen, of a retired Education and Country Life? I grant there is infinite Futility in the Schoolmen: But I deny that a Volume of that doth so much Mischief, as a Page of Minute Philosophy. That weak or wicked Men should, by favour of the World, creep into Power and high Stations in the Church, is nothing wonderful: and that in fuch Stations they should behave like themfelves, is natural to suppose. But all the while it is evident, that not the Gospel but the World, not the Spirit but the Flesh, not God but the Devil, puts them upon their unworthy Atchievements. We make no Difficulty to grant, That nothing is more infamous than Vice and Ignorance in a Clergyman; nothing more base than a Hypocrite, more frivolous than a Pedant, more cruel than an Inquisitor. But it must be also granted by you, Gentlemen, that nothing is more ridiculous and abfurd, than for pedantic, ignorant, and corrupt Men to cast the first Stone, at every Shadow of their own Defects and Vices in other Men.

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XXXV. ALC. When I confider the DIAL. detestable State of Slavery and Superstition, I feel my Heart dilate and expand it felf to grafp that inestimable Bleffing of Independent Liberty. This is the facred and high Prerogative, the very Life and Health of our English Constitution. You must not therefore think it strange, if with a vigilant and curious Eye, we guard it against the minutest Appearance of Evil. You must even fuffer us to cut round about, and very deep, and make use of the magnifying Glass, the better to view and extirpate every the least Speck, which shall discover it self in what we are careful and jealous to preserve, as the Apple of our Eye. CRI. As for unbounded Liberty, I leave it to Savages, among whom alone I believe it is to be found: But, for the reasonable legal Liberty of our Constitution, I most heartily and fincerely wish it may for ever subsist and flourish among us. You and all other Englishmen cannot be too vigilant, or too earnest, to preserve this goodly Frame, or to curb and disappoint the wicked Ambition of whoever, Layman or Ecclefiastic. shall attempt to change our free and gentle Government into a flavish

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DIAL or severe one. But what Pretext can this afford for your Attempts against Religion, or indeed, how can it be confistent with them? Is not the Protestant Religion a main Part of our Legal Constitution? I remember to have heard a Foreigner remark, That we of this Island were very good Protestants, but no Christians. But whatever Minute Philosophers may wish, or Foreigners say, it is certain our Laws speak a different Language. ALC. This puts me in mind of the wife Reasoning of a certain sage Magistrate, who, being pressed by the Raillery and Arguments of an ingenious Man, had nothing to fay for his Religion but that, ten Millions of People inhabiting the same Island might, whether right or wrong, if they thought good, establish Laws for the worshipping of God in their Temples, and appealing to him in their Courts of Justice. And that in case ten thousand ingenious Men should publickly deride and trample on those Laws, it might be just and lawful for the faid ten Millions to expel the faid ten Thousand ingenious Men out of their faid Island. EUPH. And pray, what Answer would you make to this Remark of the fage Magistrate?

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strate? ALC. The Answer is plain. By DIAL. the Law of Nature, which is superior to all positive Institutions, Wit and Knowledge have a Right to command Folly and Ignorance. I fay, ingenious Men have by natural Right a Dominion over Fools. EUPH. What. Dominion over the Laws and People of Great Britain, Minute Philosophers may be entitled to by Nature, I shall not difpute, but leave to be confidered by the Public. ALC. This Doctrine, it must be owned, was never thoroughly understood before our own Times. In the last Age, Hobbes and his Followers. though otherwise very great Men, declared for the Religion of the Magistrate: probably because they were afraid of the Magistrate: but Times are changed, and the Magistrate may now be afraid of us. CRI. I allow the Magistrate may well be afraid of you in one Sense, I mean, afraid to trust you. This brings to my Thoughts a Passage on the Trial of Leander for a capital Offence. That Gentleman having picked out and excluded from his Jury, by peremptory Exception, all but some Men of Fashion and Pleasure, humbly moved when Dorcon was going to kiss the Book, that he might be required to declare upon Honour,

V.

DIAL. Honour, whether he believed either God or Gospel. Dorcon, rather than hazard his Reputation as a Man of Honour and Free-thinker, openly avow'd that he Upon which the believed in neither. Court declared him unfit to ferve on a Jury. By the same reason, so many were fet aside, as made it necessary to put off the Trial. We are very easy, replied Alciphron, about being trusted to serve on Turies, if we can be admitted to ferve in lucrative Employments. CRI. But what if the Government should injoin, that every one, before he was fworn into Office, should make the same Declaration which Dorcon was required to make? ALC. God forbid! I hope there is no fuch Design on foot. CRI. Whatever Defigns may be on foot, thus much is certain: The Christian Reformed Religion is a principal Part and Corner-stone of our free Constitution; and I verily think, the only thing that makes us deferving of Freedom, or capable of enjoying it. Freedom is either a Bleffing or a Curfe, as Men use it. And to me it seems, that if our Religion were once destroy'd from among us, and those Notions, which pass for Prejudices of a Christian Education, erased from the Minds of Britons, the best

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best thing that could befall us would be DIAL. the Loss of our Freedom. Surely a Peo-V. ple wherein there is such restless Ambition, such high Spirits, such Animosity of Faction, so great Interests in Contest, such unbounded Licence of Speech and Press, amidst so much Wealth and Luxury, nothing but those veteres aviæ, which you pretend to extirpate, could have hithereto kept from ruin.

XXXVI. Under the Christian Religion this Nation hath been greatly improved. From a Sort of Savages, we have grown civil, polite, and learned. We have made a decent and noble Figure both at home and abroad. And, as our Religion decreafeth, I am afraid we shall be found to have declined. Why then should we perfift in the dangerous Experiment? ALC. One would think, Crito, you had forgot the many Calamities occasioned by Churchmen and Religion. CRI. And one would think, you had forgot what was answered this very Day to that Objection. not to repeat eternally the same Things, I shall observe in the first Place, That if we reflect on the past State of Christendom, and of our own Country in particular, with our Feuds and Factions fub-VOL. I. Aa fifting

DIAL fifting while we were all of the same Religion, for instance, that of the White and Red Roses, so violent and bloody and of fuch long Continuance; we can have no Affurance that those ill Humours, which have fince shewn themselves under the Masque of Religion, would not have broke out with some other Pretext, if this had been wanting. I observe in the second Place, that it will not follow from any Observations you can make on our History, that the Evils, accidentally occasioned by Religion, bear any Proportion either to the good Effects it hath really produced, or the Evils it hath prevented. Laftly, I observe, that the best Things may, by Accident, be the Occasion of Evil; which accidental Effect is not, to fpeak properly and truly, produced by the good Thing it felf, but by some evil Thing, which, being neither Part, Property, nor Effect of it, happens to be joined with it. But I should be ashamed to infift and enlarge on fo plain a Point. Certainly whatever Evils this Nation might have formerly sustained from Superstition, no Man of common Sense will fay, the Evils felt or apprehended at prefent are from that Quarter. Priestcraft is not the reigning Distemper at this Day. And

And it will be owned, that a wife Man, DIAL. who takes upon him to be vigilant for the publick Weal, should touch proper Things at proper Times, and not prefcribe for a Surfeit when the Distemper is a Confumption. ALC. I think we have fufficiently discussed the Subject of this Day's Conference. And now, let Lyficles take it as he will, I must in regard to my own Character, as a fair impartial Adversary, acknowledge there is fomething in what Crito hath faid, upon the Usefulness of the Christian Religion. I will even own to you that some of our Sect are for allowing it a Toleration. I remember, at a Meeting of several ingenious Men, after much Debate we came fucceffively to divers Resolutions. The first was, that no Religion ought to be tolerated in the State: But this on more mature Thought was judged impracticable. The second was, that all Religions should be tolerated, but none countenanced except Atheism: But it was apprehended, that this might breed Contentions among the lower Sort of People. We came therefore to conclude in the third Place, that some Religion or other should be established for the Use of the Vulgar. And after a long Dispute what this

THE MINUTE, &c.

V. young Man, perceiving no Signs of Agreement, proposed that the present Religion might be tolerated, till a better was
found. But allowing it to be expedient,
I can never think it true, so long as there
lie unanswerable Objections against it,
which, if you please, I shall take the
Liberty to propose at our next Meeting.
To which we all agreed.

The End of the First Volume.



